



PHIL MAYS

ILLUSTRATED

WINTER ANNUAL.

256
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No 5

ONE SHILLING.

EDITED BY GRANT RICHARDS.

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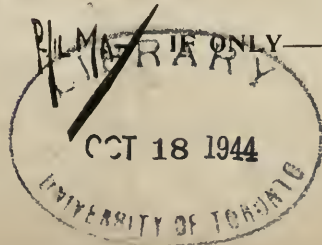
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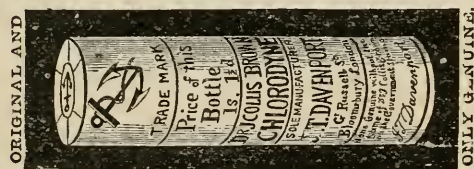
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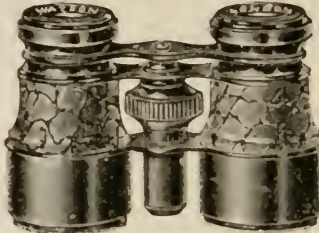
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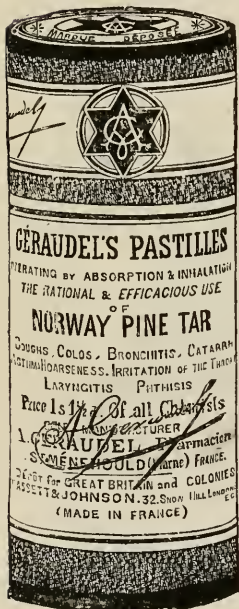
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PHIL MAY'S

Illustrated

III

(Winter Annual.

(1894)



5th issue

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1895

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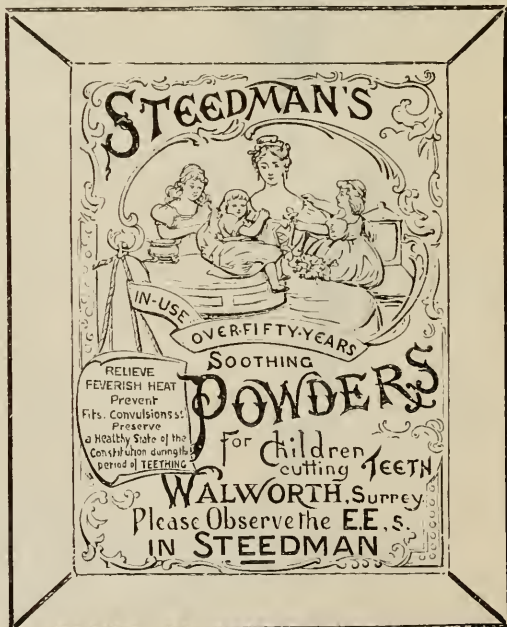
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A BALLAD OF AN ARTIST'S WIFE.

BY JOHN DAVIDSON.

I N vain the war-worn nations sought
A means of peace; and folk in vain
By vote and party tumult thought
To re-establish Saturn's reign.

Yet still the gracious stars above
Gave audience to ancient rhymes;
For men and women fell in love
As deeply as in happier times.

"Sweet wife, this heavy-hearted age
Is nought to us; we two shall look
To Art, and fill a perfect page
In Life's ill-written Doomsday Book."

He wrought in colour; blood and brain
Gave fire and might; and beauty grew
And flowered with every magic stain
His passion on the canvas threw.

They shunned the world and worldly ways;
He laboured with a constant will;
But few would look, and none would praise,
Because of something lacking still.

After a time her days with sighs
And tears o'erflowed; for blighting need
Bedimmed the lustre of her eyes,
And there were little mouths to feed.

"My bride shall ne'er be common-place,"
He thought, and glanced; and glanced again:
At length he looked her in the face;
And lo, a woman old and plain!

About this time the world's heart failed—
The lusty heart no fear could rend;
In every land wild voices wailed,
And prophets prophesied the end.

"To-morrow or to-day," he thought,
"May be Eternity; and I
Have neither felt nor fashioned aught
That makes me unconcerned to die.

"With care and counting of the cost
My life a sterile waste has grown,
Wherein my better dreams are lost
Like chaff in the Sahara sown.

"I must escape this living tomb!
My life shall yet be rich and free,
And on the very stroke of Doom
My soul at last begin to be.

"Wife, children, duty, household fires
For victims of the good and true!
For me my infinite desires,
Freedom and things untried and new!

"I would encounter all the throng
Of thoughts and feelings life can show,
The sweet embrace, the stinging thong
Of every earthly joy and woe;

"And from the world's impending wreck
And out of pain and pleasure weave
Beauty undreamt of, to bedeck
The festival of Doomsday Eve."

He fled, and joined a motley throng
That held carousal day and night;
With love and wit, with dance and song,
They snatched a last intense delight.

PHIL MAY'S WINTER ANNUAL

Passion to mould an age's art,
Enough to keep a century sweet,
Was in an hour consumed; each heart
Lavished a life in every beat.

Amazing beauty filled the looks
Of sleepless women; music bore
New wonder on its wings; and books
Throbbled with a thought unknown before.

The sun began to smoke and flare
Like a spent lamp about to die;
The dusky moon tarnished the air;
The planets withered in the sky.

Earth reeled and lurched upon her road;
Tigers were cowed, and wolves grew tame;
Seas shrank, and rivers backward flowed,
And mountain-ranges burst in flame.

The artist's wife, a soul devout,
To all these things gave little heed;
For though the sun was going out,
There still were little mouths to feed.

And there were also shrouds to stitch,
And chares to do; with all her might,
To feed her babes, she served the rich,
And kept her useless tears till night.

But by-and-by her sight grew dim;
Her strength gave way; in desperate mood
She laid her down to die. "Tell him,"
She sighed, "I fed them while I could."

The children met a wretched fate:
Self-love was all the vogue and vaunt,
And charity gone out of date;
Wherefore they pined and died of want.

Aghast he heard the story: "Dead!
All dead in hunger and despair!
I courted misery," he said;
"But here is more than I can bear."

Then, as he wrought, the stress of woe
Appeared in many a magic stain;
And all adored his work, for lo,
Tears mingled now with blood and brain!

"Look, look!" they cried; "this man can weave
Beauty from anguish that appals;"
And at the feast of Doomsday Eve
They hung his pictures in their halls,

And gazed; and came again between
The faltering dances eagerly:
They said, "The loveliest we have seen,
The last, of man's work, we shall see!"

Then was there neither death nor birth;
Time ceased; and through the ether fell
The smoky sun, the leprous earth—
A cinder and an icicle.

No wrathful vials were unsealed;
Silent, the first things passed away:
No terror reigned; no trumpet pealed
The dawn of Everlasting Day.

The bitter draught of sorrow's cup
Passed with the seasons and the years;
And Wisdom dried for ever up
The deep, old fountainhead of tears.

Out of the grave and ocean's bed
The artist saw the people rise;
And all the living and the dead
Were borne aloft to Paradise.

PHIL MAY'S WINTER ANNUAL

He came where on a silver throne
A spirit sat for ever young;
Before her Seraphs worshipped prone,
And Cherubs silver censers swung.

He asked, "Who may this martyr be?
What votaress of saintly rule?"
A Cherub said, "No martyr; she
Had one gift: she was beautiful."

Then came he to another bower
Where one sat on a golden seat,
Adored by many a heavenly Power
With golden censers smoking sweet.

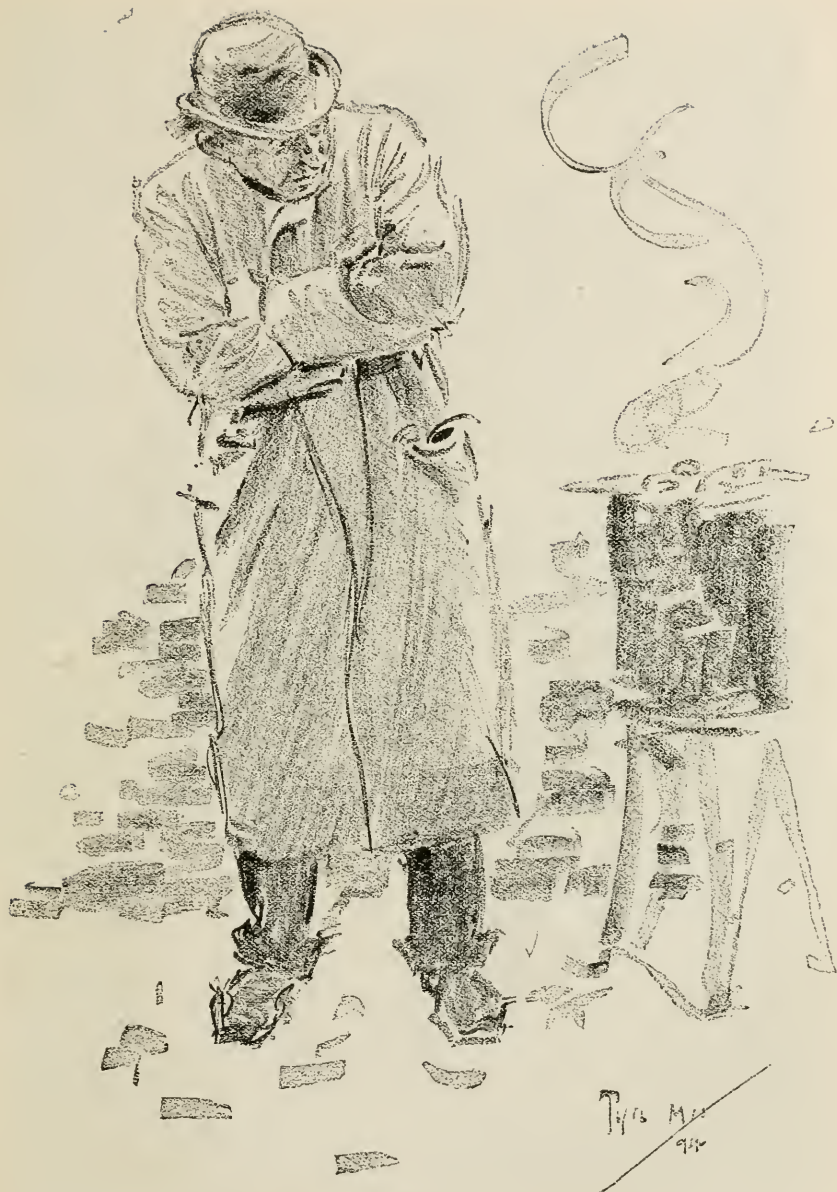
"This was some gallant wench who led
Faint-hearted folk and set them free?"
"Oh no! a simple maid," they said,
"Who spent her life in charity."

At last he reached a mansion blest,
Where on a diamond throne, endued
With nameless beauty, one possessed
Ineffable beatitude.

The praises of this matchless soul
The sons of God proclaimed aloud;
From diamond censers odours stole;
And Hierarchs before her bowed.

"Who was she?" God Himself replied:
"In misery her lot was cast;
She lived a woman's life, and died
Working My work until the last."

It was his wife. He said, "I pray
Thee, Lord, despatch me now to Hell."
But God said, "No; here shall you stay,
And in her peace for ever dwell."



ALL HOT!

THE MAN
9/11



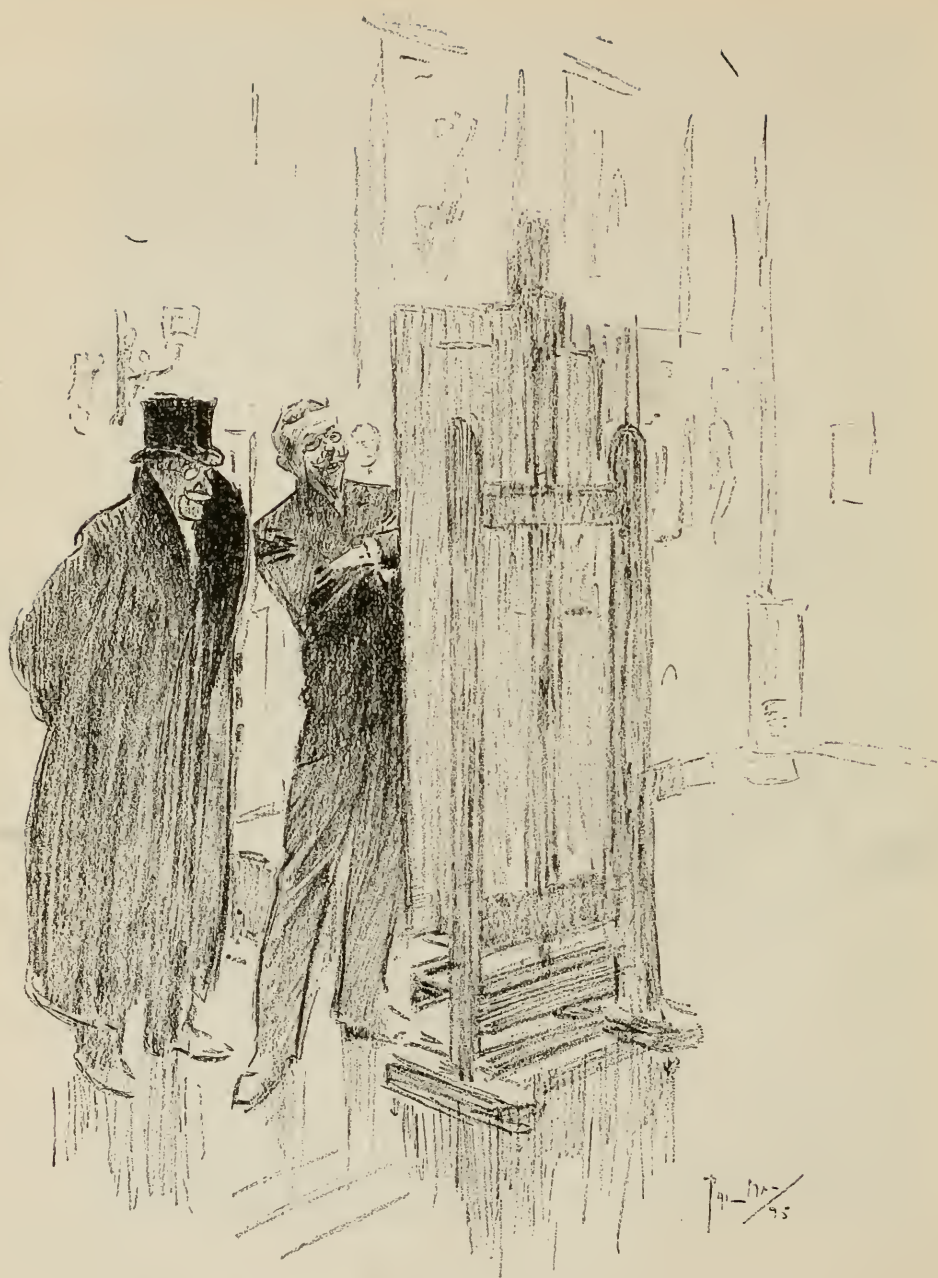
BROTHER BRUSHES

DICK COURBOLD.



EXTRAVAGANCE.

She : "A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS."



Artist: "YES, I THINK THAT IS THE BEST PICTURE I HAVE PAINTED."
Critic (kindly): "DON'T LET *that* DISCOURAGE YOU, MY BOY."

"THE LIGHT THAT NEVER WAS."

BY VIOLET HUNT.

I AM an interviewer. *La belle nouvelle!* Every one, in these days of passionate notoriety, is either interviewer or interviewed, and sometimes both! Mr. Andrew Lang once described a community whose members "eked out a precarious livelihood by taking in each other's washing." There is some analogy between this domestic difficulty and the *linge sale* of gossip, which the interviewer does not permit to be washed at home. I am the first to deplore the existence of this social scourge; but the fact remains that a living can be got out of it, and, accordingly, I have made it my business to pursue inoffensive men and women into the sacred recesses of the Home and the Hearth (a mere figure of speech; we live on the House-tops now), and to gather as much of the true inwardness of their lives as will serve to make an appetising column in "The Light that Never Was," the enterprising journal for which I cater.

"The Light that Never Was," like other "pots in the swim," anxious to persevere there, is always on the look-out for "New Features." New Features for Old is the birth cry, and sometimes the death rattle, of every paper; and in pursuance of this demand I have succeeded in originating a method "as strange as it is new," and one which gains me and my paper immense credit.

As the great Flaubert has remarked, *Personne ne connaît personne*. I will add, least of all does

he know himself. Why then subpoena him in his own case at all? Of what use to go to the painter, the author, the playwright, for the best information concerning himself? If even one could take him unawares! But no; the interviewer makes an appointment, the subject is conscious, primed, braced up, ready with a series of cards he wishes to force on the public, a collection of least characteristic facts which he would like to have dragged into prominence. It is as if a man should go to the dentist with his mind made up as to the number of teeth he shall have out: a decision which should always rest with any dentist who respects himself.

No, my method, on which I pride myself, is to seek out his nearest and dearest, those who have the privilege—or the annoyance—of seeing him at all hours, at all seasons, at unawares. If he is a painter, 'tis the wife of his brush that I would question; if an author, the partner of his pen; and it is from them I would elicit the facts, damning or otherwise, which will put him in his true light, "the light that never was" yet on genius or celebrity till I came forward with my famous method.

The nearest and dearest! You will say that these two qualifications are not always vested in one person? No. People's nearest are not always their dearest, and *vice versa*, and in some cases a zealous search fails to unearth a representative of either qualification! In that case

there is nothing for it but to seek out the *valet de chambre*, to whom he is no hero, the housemaid who empties the waste-paper basket, the model who poses, or any other humble spectator. The dog who lies on the rug, could he speak, I would catechise. What flattering revelations would not the hound Maida have made concerning Sir Walter Scott?

The other day I was told off to interview Ambrose Maddar-Brown, the famous painter of idyllic landscapes of so convincing a chiaroscuro that nothing but the frame keeps up the illusion, and the country cousins are quite taken in, and would walk straight out of the big room at the Academy into the rustic *annexe* if it were not for the monitory bars of gold.

I called at his house in St. John's Wood one Monday morning early in April. A Sabbath calm reigned there—very hard to acquire in London. The very servants had a hushed look as of acolytes in a temple. I was ushered into the big, handsome drawing room, upholstered all in one colour—it would be invidious to specify it—and a little dumpy, palpitating woman, whose sensitive lips seemed cast in a mould of a perpetual "Hush!" came forward to meet me.

"Mrs. Maddar-Brown, I believe?" said I.

She began hurriedly, "Mr. Maddar-Brown is too busy to see anybody—*anybody*! I haven't even told him you are here."

"On no account tell him, madam. *You* are the person I wished to see."

"Me!" said she, with undisguised surprise.

I explained my position as an interviewer.

"Ah, Mr. Maddar-Brown sends them all away," said she aggressively.

"I am aware of that," said I. Indeed, I had poured balm on the wounds of a prominent member of our staff, who had come back a few days ago smarting from an insulting message

delivered by Mr. Maddar-Brown's very pretty parlour-maid. "But if you, madam, will be kind enough to furnish me with some little details as to your husband's career, his method of work, and so forth, no harm will be done, and I shall leave you a happy man. Any data from you would be of immense value to me. You are his constant companion, I presume?"

"I never leave him. I have never left him for a day since I was married. He won't go anywhere without me."

"Quite so! Quite so!"

"You see, he doesn't care to travel alone. He loses ——"

"Himself?"

"And his things, often. He is of a very nervous disposition."

"It is easy to gather that, madam, from the extreme delicacy of his work, which must correspond with extreme mental sensitiveness."

"Ah, yes," she murmured, "nobody understands him but me. Other people only put him out and irritate him. They can't understand him, his moods, his silences——"

"He is very much absorbed, no doubt?"

"Oh, yes, he very often does not say a word for days."

"And what do you do?"

"I get to know what he wants by the look of his face. I know exactly what to do for him, don't you know?"

"I do know. I am sure, madam, that you are his right hand—both hands——"

"Indeed, he won't allow any one but me to touch his things," she said eagerly. "I clean his palette and his brushes for him; the sables are very troublesome."

"You are an artist yourself?" I asked her suddenly.

"I used to exhibit, before I was married, but now I have not the time. My day is

fully taken up. What with keeping the children out of Mr. Madder-Brown's way, and seeing that Mr. Madder-Brown isn't disturbed by noises, and making his clothes——”

“His clothes?” I interrupted, with a sudden reminiscence of Carlyle's flannel boots.

“He can't bear bought shirts,” said she simply; “and he always paints in green baize coats that I make for him. His æsthetic sense is so excessively developed, it is torture to him to wear any but certain colours.”

“Green, the colour of the foliage he loves so well. I suppose it is useless to ask you where last summer's triumph was painted?”

Mrs. Madder-Brown looked very frightened indeed. “Oh no, you mustn't ask; we won't tell; Mr. Madder-Brown is so afraid of other artists finding it out. If another artist came to the place, he would leave it immediately. He must have it all to himself. Don't ask, please!”

“I refrain. But it must be a delightful spot.”

“Beautiful, but there's nowhere to live.”

“You seem to have managed it?”

“Oh yes, but I can live anywhere.”

“But how about your husband?”

“I try to spare him as much as possible—we always travel with an air bed.”

“For you?”

“I sleep on the floor. It doesn't matter much, it's generally far too hot to sleep in Le Puy—oh, good heavens!”

“I will make a point of forgetting it, madam,” said I. “But painful as the experience must be, you have your reward in the enormous success—the European reputation of your husband. The papers are full of him.”

“Yes, I make a point of reading them.”

“Doesn't he?”

“No, never; I never allow it. I burn the

unfavourable ones. They would upset him so—he is so very sensitive.” “What is it, Jane?” to a servant who just then entered.

“The master, mum,” said Jane; “he's just cut his finger! He's calling for you just awful!”

Mrs. Madder-Brown hardly said good-bye to me! She flew from the room, and I let myself out into the street.

* * * *

All the staff of “The Light that Never Was” scrambled for Miss “Excelsiora D.,” authoress of “The Passionate Tomboy”—“such a jolly girl, up to anything, to judge from her books.” She was but twenty, the daughter of a clergyman in Yorkshire, so report ran, and had made her mark in the first instance with a small pamphlet entitled “The School for Parents.” She lived alone, I was told, with a mother-of-all-work. Her flat was very high up, there was no lift! “Excelsiora!” I murmured as I toiled up the stairs. “Ecco,” said a fat Italian, standing in his shirt-sleeves at his own front door, presumably one of “Excelsiora's” wild Bohemian friends.

An old lady, with an ample front of black satin and lots of watch chain, frisked past the door as a very dirty “general” opened it. “Excelsiora” was out, irrevocably. Of course, in pursuance of my plan, I had made sure of that. I asked for Mrs. D——. The black satin lady came forward twirling the yards of watch chain nervously.

“My daughter is out,” she murmured; “she is never in unless she makes an appointment. Her time is very much occupied. She cannot possibly see all the people that come and ask to see her.”

“I am quite aware of that, madam,” I replied politely; “I am told that humble supplicants scramble on the stairs for an audience,

and threaten to spend the night on the doorstep if they are not heard."

"Not *quite* that," she smiled blandly ; "but——"

"The competition is very fierce, at any rate. I quite expected to find an editor and a publisher or two cooling their heels on the doorstep—I only wondered if the humble interviewer might find a place there too."

"You are an interviewer?" Her face lit up. "Dear Excelsiora will certainly see you. She told me *never* to deny an interviewer. When will you call again?"

"I shall not be able to call again, I fear, before our next issue. Perhaps you, madam, will favour me with a few particulars concerning your talented daughter's career."

"I shall be very glad," said the old lady in her strong Yorkshire accent. "Sit down. Who should know her, if not her own mother? Will you mind if I go on with a blouse I am finishing for dear Excelsiora? She is so particular. I have unpicked it ten times. She is difficult to please."

"She has the soul of an artist. Is it true that her first literary venture was put forth at the age of sixteen?"

"I don't know my daughter's age myself," replied the mother a trifle guardedly.

"Her first pamphlet created quite a furore."

"It did, indeed. 'Fancy, mother, all Europe standing on its hind legs about a little drawing-room pamphlet!' the dear girl said at the time. 'Editors and publishers all running after poor little me!'"

"Touching modesty! Then Miss Excelsiora blossomed early?"

"She used to write when she was quite a tiny mite. 'Mother, I must make my scratch upon the world,' she used to say."

"And she has made it. There are some

passages in 'The Passionate 'Tomboy' that have shaken Europe to its foundations."

"Yes, I am told so. I have not myself read my daughter's novel. She says it would only unsettle me, that I am not likely to be able to understand it. One requires a very strong——"

"I agree with you. Miss Excelsiora is in the very fore-front of advanced thought, and her writings are strong meat for—mothers——"

"Indeed, sir, you are right. Her grandfather and my family are most painfully behindhand. They are quite unable to keep pace with modern thought. It shocks them. We are exiles in consequence—in the cause of art."

"Indeed!"

"My family would never speak to dear Excelsiora after the publication of her first book. So we came to live in town."

"And you, madam, regret the country existence?"

A spasm of regret crossed her wrinkled old face. "Maybe I do, maybe I don't. But it is all for the best. Excelsiora *must* live in town, she must keep herself before the public, not allow her name to drop—she goes everywhere, she has three clubs—she is hardly ever in the evening."

"You must be lonely?"

"I can't say but I miss old friends a bit—and my whist—I have no friends in London. It's quite another sort of thing, you see, sir. We see plenty of people here, but of course it's different. We give parties—suppers of eight. I may say I am a first-rate cook."

"I am sure of it, madam. I can see it by your face."

"We ask my daughter's literary friends. And they don't know the good things they're eating are cooked by a silly old woman in the kitchen, that's watching them through the chink of the door."

I looked an interrogation?

“Oh, I never sit down to table. I am far too busy. Besides, I should only be in the way—a poor old country body like me.” She giggled furtively. “I believe I am often taken for my daughter’s nurse. People think she’s an orphan. It’s more picturesque. I don’t mind. I am not equal to her friends. I don’t like them. That’s a secret. They are not like the young men of my day. They say such dreadful things——”

A brusque voice was heard in the hall. “Mother! . . . You tiresome old woman, you’ve forgotten to——” The servant muttered something. “Mr. — here, you say, Jane?” The great Excelsiora entered, full of apologies. . . . I never saw any one efface herself as quickly as the mother of the literary lady.

* * * *

Z., the distinguished historian, was rather a difficult subject. There was a certain degree of mystery about his habitat, where no one ever ventured to call on him. A zealous search failed to discover his nearest and dearest; he had neither wife, children, nor relations, but appeared to rely entirely on the ministrations of a trusty housekeeper, as crusty as himself, and who “did” for him, as the phrase is. He was well off; the royalties on his books brought him in something enormous; his house, in which he never entertained, was reported handsome, well-furnished, and dusty. I made my way one afternoon about dusk to Cavendish Square. I rang the old-fashioned bell and waited. After a long while I heard a fumbling with the lock on the other side, and the door was slowly opened by a very small child of about ten, with pale yellow London-coloured hair and complexion.

“Mother’s busy,” she said. “Got company.

She says will I do? I am able to give a message.”

“And who may you be, little woman?”

“Mother’s the housekeeper. We live ’ere.”

“Only you two?”

“Mother and I and old Mr. Z. What might you want, sir? Mother told me to arst?”

“I’ll see your mother presently. You can talk to me for the present,” I said, entering the hall with an air of authority. We interviewers have to assert ourselves.

“It’s a gemman, mother!” shouted the child down the stairs.

A strident and highly unprepossessing voice answered, “Take the gemman into Mr. Z.’s study, Annie, and arst him to wait.”

The child led the way into a very large, untidy and dusty study. “This is where the old man works,” said she, passing her dirty little hand over the papers scattered about. “See the owl on top of his pen? He explained it all to me once; but laws, I’ve forgotten. He’s always a-trying to teach me something.”

She was a pretty child, but prematurely old. “Is he very kind to you?” I asked.

“Yes,” she said carelessly; “he calls me his little ’Geria. I often sit ’long of him in the evenings on his knee and let him play with my ’air. He likes his beard stroked. He guv me this locket, and a doll, and a gold watch—mother’s keeping that for me till I’m big—but I like his far better. I’m to have it when I’m grown up and he’s dead. I asked him to leave it to me in his will.”

“And what did he say?”

“He said he would if I would promise not to wish him dead for the sake of it, so I said I wouldn’t. I like him. I’m to have heaps of things when he’s dead—so’s mother.”

An old lady with a gorgeous headgear entered at this juncture. “Good-day, sir. Little

Annie been talking to you? Oh lor, she's a sharp child, she is."

"Mr. Z. is out?"

"And if he weren't out, he wouldn't be in, sir, excuse me. He never sees people. I give messages. . . . Are you one of them they call interviewers?"

I answered in the affirmative.

"Oh, I've sent heaps of you away," she remarked contemptuously. "He never lets 'em to him. He can't abide strangers. Nobody ever comes 'ere."

"Not even his friends—his relations?"

"He ain't got none, sir. We're all he's got, little Annie and me."

"Are you related to him?"

"I've done for him since I was a widdy, and done 'im well, though I say it as shouldn't. Relations! we don't encourage relations, Annie and I, snuffing round to see what they can get. He's a real gentleman, is Mr. Z., and that free with his money that anybody can get anything out of him. He needs looking after."

"And you do it," I said, rather bitterly.

"I was never one to go back from responsi-

bility," she said complacently; "and I like the place, when all's said and done, and 'ere I'll stop until——" Her gesture was significant.

"Is he very frail?"

"There ain't much life in 'im, sir, and he'll go out like the waft of a candle one of these fine days. . . . However, he don't give much trouble; he don't care to eat anything but a fried sole and a cut from our joint now and then, and he goes to bed at ten. He likes to have little Annie to sit 'long of him in the evenings. If you want to know about him, better arst little Annie there. I do believe he loves that child better than any one else in the whole world. It'll be a shame if he don't *remember* her. . . . Want his hautograph, sir? I've got a heap of 'em here in this drawer. He writes 'em out for little Annie. I charge a shilling each for 'em, sir."

I paid my shilling, and carried off the long slip of paper with the straggling, helpless signature of one of the greatest men of the century, written at the bidding of a little lodging-house minx. That was the saddest interview I ever had.





"I THAY, LET 'EM ALONE, CAN'T YER?"
 "WELL, *they* STARTED ON ME FIRST."



"WON'T YER BE MRS. 'ORKINS, LIZA?"
"NAY, 'ARRY; YOU'RE ONLY A APOLOGY FOR A MAN."
"WELL, WON'T YER ACCEPT A HAPOLOGY?"



BROTHER BRUSHES.

WILLIAM CADDY.



A FACT (more's the pity).

Artist : "OH, BY THE WAY, HAVE YOU HAD LUNCH?"

Little Waif (*posing for the first time*) : "WHAT'S THAT?"

GODS I HAVE KNOWN.

BY GRANT ALLEN.

THERE was once a man, says a legend of the Fifties, who enjoyed a well-deserved celebrity in this town of London as a professional lady-killer. (I need hardly say I do not refer to Jack the Ripper.) Metaphorically speaking, his chambers were adorned with the scalps of his victims—more genially symbolised to the outer eye by cabinet photographs. His quiver was full of them. One day, however, this Don Juan of his age announced in the public press the forthcoming appearance of a collection of reminiscences. "Women I have Loved" was its attractive title. Half feminine Mayfair waited for its issue in trembling expectation. Was he going to give names, or only initials? At last, after long delays, the fatal work came out. It was found to be divided into six compartments: "I., My Mother; II., My Aunt; III., My Sister; IV., My Wife; V., My Daughter; VI., ——" and here the tension became positively painful. You turned to the page containing this last terrible revelation, and you read—"My Grandmother." All London breathed again; but as a speculation that book was a dead failure.

Now, reminiscence being the fashion, I too am going to give some innocent reminiscences. Unfortunately, however, I have nothing very shocking to reminisce; the story of my sisters, my cousins, and my aunts is a painfully respectable one. So I propose to discourse in this place about "Gods I have Met," in much the same spirit as the humble lady-killer's. I have never been personally acquainted with Deity,

like Mr. William Watson, who sings, "Affable, aweless, smiling, I met God, delighted with His work as when 'twas new." But I can remember the rise and fall of several minor gods, objects of a local or temporary cult; and of these I would speak—the Truly Great, whose meteoric appearance upon the stage of life I can now recall in several successive avatars.

The Truly Great, you know, we have always with us. No sooner has one of its incarnations disappeared than straightway another crops up to replace it. It is *Le roi est mort; vive le roi*, from generation to generation. And by the Truly Great I mean those esoteric prophets of a superior sect whose greatness the Common Herd has not yet learned to recognise. If you are a genuine worshipper of the Truly Great, you always speak of society at large as "the Common Herd," and you seldom condescend to reason with it or contradict it. On the contrary, you quote at it your one fragment of Dante (at second-hand from Macaulay), and remark in very choice Italian that you do not discuss it, but look and pass on. The main representative of the Truly Great at the present moment is probably Ibsen. If you happen to be acquainted with a rabid Ibsenite, you will know what I mean. You will have been made to feel your own infinitesimal smallness.

From this example you will readily guess that the Truly Great are sometimes really so, and sometimes otherwise. Ibsen is really a profound thinker; he can even outlive the absurdities of the Ibsenites. Indeed, just as

Wilkes was "not a Wilkesite," I doubt if Ibsen countenances Ibsenism. On the other hand, the Truly Great is just as often as not an inflated bubble. I can remember, for instance, when Mr. Bailey of Festus occupied the post with much distinction; it is filled for some people at the present moment by an equally frank impostor, M. Maurice Maeterlinck. To say the truth, the intellectual quality of the Truly Great Man has little or nothing to do with his greatness; it is the fact that he is the peculiar property of an exclusive clique, who run him to show their own immense superiority. Thus you may run Mr. Aubrey Beardsley or Mr. Francis Thompson, exactly as you please; the great point is that it is *you* who are running him.

The first of the Truly Great whom I can well remember was one of the False Gods of esoteric cliquism—the first Lord Lytton. "Bulwer," as we used to say in those days, was believed by his following in the early Fifties to be a much greater man than Dickens and Thackeray. He discoursed, in capitals, about the Good, the True, the Beautiful. "Mr. Dickens," the Bulwer-worshipper used to say in those days, "is incurably vulgar; he never draws a gentleman. Mr. Thackeray—pooh, Mr. Thackeray is very well for the clubs and the superficialities; but for Soul, for Depth, for Reality, for Beauty, give *me* Edward Bulwer." We listened and were impressed. We shrank into the recesses of our own critical littleness. Shamefacedly to ourselves we admitted the awful fact that we laughed over Dickens, we smiled over Thackeray, but we fell asleep over the True and the Beautiful. We knew this was owing to our own inferiority, and we envied the pure souls who could rise to their Bulwer.

In time, however, the sun rose high, and melted the wax wings of that tinsel Icarus. He fell plump, like Lucifer. About the dawn of

the Sixties, men began to discover that they had mistaken pretentiousness for profundity of thought, and confused bombast with sublimity of diction. One whiff of commonsense, like Bonaparte's whiff of grapeshot, and lo and behold! there was no more Bulwer. He became just Lord Lytton, an eccentric old peer; and the clique that had worshipped him was found out and discredited. You cannot base a great permanent reputation on the judicious use of capital letters: if you could, this article might rank among the most Truly Great in the language.

Then the Superior Souls who led the world began to look about for a fitting object of their superior worship. Mr. Ruskin in those days had been attracting attention by discovering Italy, and especially Giotto. The Superior Souls said, "Let us bow down to Ruskin!" And they bowed down, grotesquely. They wrote rapturously of Botticelli. To be sure, the greater part of them had never been in Florence; and when a man who has never been in Florence writes or talks enthusiastically of Botticelli, you may fairly suspect him of being an affected prig. For the truth is, the few Botticellis outside Florence are not good enough to make any man go honestly wild about. However, the name alone is worth all the money; "Botticelli," you know; so soft and so musical! So the admirers of the Truly Great fell down before their new god: they said, "There is no painter but Botticelli, and Mr. Ruskin is his prophet." They felt themselves *so* superior to the Common Herd, who admired the Derby Day, or even to the Few who were beginning to talk about Millais and Holman Hunt and this young man Burne Jones, "who is really too absurd, but still in his way clever." For those were the days when people regarded "Pre-Raphaelitism" as doubtfully

sane, and thought the Scapegoat "such a singular picture!" If only they could have foreseen the New English Art Club!

Ruskin-worship in the late Sixties rapidly rose to the rank of an esoteric cult, almost as marked as Theosophy and Blavatsky-worship in the London of the moment. I was once a guest in a certain Oxford college (not my own), where Ruskin at the time was a member of common-room. After dinner, one of the junior fellows, with whom I was staying, ventured, in spite of the Great Man's presence, to tell a curious Western American story he had just been reading—it was called "The Luck of Roaring Camp," and was really very interesting. The author was said to be somebody of the name of Harte, who had written some funny verses about a cheating Chinaman. The common-room listened to this ill-bred outburst with marked coldness; and when the speaker arrived at the climax, "The little beggar gripped me," it was felt at once that Greatness must be protected from such gratuitous onslaughts of rank vulgarity. The Great Man rose, and his supporters followed him. Three of us were left in possession of the table. The remainder proceeded to hold an Indignation Meeting in a senior fellow's room against the man who had been indecent enough to repeat an American tale before Mr. Ruskin's face, and the two accomplices who had so far forgotten themselves as to listen to it with interest. For America was taboo, and Mr. Ruskin had openly said in print he could not visit a country which had no castles.

One finds it hard to believe nowadays that a story of Bret Harte's should have been considered only twenty-five years ago "quite too dreadful for anything."

It was about the same time, if I recollect aright, that I first began to come across the

earlier stages in the evolution of the æsthete. The way had already been made straight for the coming Greek god by Rossetti and Morris. Pater and Symonds were young dons in residence. Paganism was in the air; the cult of the Hellenic, with which was incorporated the cult of the nude, just trembled on the verge of realization before us. It was bound to come; and one day we beheld it. I well recollect the first public appearance of the incarnated æsthete. 'Twas at the old Vic. at Oxford, when the Shooting Stars (the University Amateur Dramatic Club) were giving an entertainment. The stalls used to dress; but we undergraduates, in coarse, short pea-jackets, crowded the pit and jammed the gallery. To be extravagantly and obtrusively "manly" in your attire was then the fashion. We prided ourselves on our roughness, and I confess I think we did well to cultivate it. Suddenly, to a world of undergraduates so apparelled, enter unawares a pale and handsome youth, clear-cut of feature, smooth-shaven of face, long-haired like a poet, bedight in evening dress of the most perfect shape, and with an orchid in his button-hole. One stud blazed glorious in his spotless shirt-front, in place of the trinity which was then habitual. His air was dainty, not to say effeminate. Traces of powder were suspected on his cheeks; his curls did not owe all their curves to nature. The House rose and howled at him; like one man it howled at him. But the æsthete got the best of it. Like all pioneers, he was the hardest of his race, with a soul prepared for instant martyrdom. He was ready to suffer death in the cause of the chappies. He looked round him and smiled. He beamed on the pit and gallery, responsive. The House howled again: "Wash it off, sir!" "Go home and tub!" "Comb your hair!" "Buy yourself a coat like a man, sir, can't you?" But

still the æsthete smiled. He gazed around him well pleased. He raised to his brow one smooth white hand, soft and rounded like a woman's. A very large diamond sparkled bright from his ring. He held his head on his hand, in a picturesque attitude. Against its will, the raging House was forced at last to admire his courage and his coolness. It howled itself hoarse, but still he stood his ground—or to be literally accurate, sat his stall unabashed, till the end of the performance. Who he was, I never heard; but Oxford woke that night to a consciousness of the fact that a new type of man had arisen among us.

After that, æstheticism rose and prospered marvellously. All you had to do was to paper your rooms from William Morris's, to buy a Baudelaire (it was Baudelaire then), and to wear an obtrusive white lily in your buttonhole. Shortly after, I was taken to see the rooms of a member of the new sect at Magdalen. They were certainly pretty. Indeed, in spite of the reekless fun which Mr. Du Maurier made a little later in *Punch* of Maudie and Postlethwaite, be it borne in mind that it was to this much-laughed-at band of long-haired young men that we owe to-day the comparative harmlessness of the average English drawing-room. I remember the time when a drawing-room was an exhibition of the Competitively Hideous; let us never forget that 'twas the ridiculed æsthetes who turned it into a home of the Unobtrusively Harmless.

There are now even a few drawing-rooms which it would not be extravagant praise to describe as pretty.

Browning, I think, was in the next degree. While the devotees of art, valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes, were going off on Rossetti, Morris, and Burne Jones, the devotees of intellect, conscious of something higher and better

within them, were battenning their souls on *Sordello* and *Caliban upon Setebos*. Not, of course, that Browning was then any intellectual novelty; he had been "discovered" long before by true critics and thinkers. But he was beginning to become fashionable with the middle of the Seventies. And, indeed, you may generally observe this measured declension in the history of the Truly Great: they begin by being unobtrusively appreciated at the hands of a quiet few; then they become the object of a cult for a self-conscious sect; finally, they are recognised by the general public, and since there is then no longer any merit in admiring them, they are quickly deserted by the genuine devotees of the Truly Great, who instantly hunt up some new shrine to worship at. Thus, during the age when a few of us were preaching Meredith in vain to a stiff-necked generation, the intellectual youths and the earnest maidens—the men who wore their hair long and the women who cut it short—were taking parts together in *A Soul's Tragedy* and reading papers before Browning Societies on *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. But by the time all the world had woke up to the fact that *A Grammarian's Funeral* and *My Last Duchess* were poems of the first rank, the intellectual youths and the earnest maidens had "got beyond Browning," and, having taken their cue from the little band of critics, were proclaiming aloud their faith in *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*. Since *Lord Ormont* appeared in an illustrated magazine, however, a revulsion has set in: there is a feeling that Meredith as the Truly Great has become hopelessly vulgarised. I understand that long-haired men and short-haired women are now considering the rival claims of Echegaray and a young Italian poet to the vacant throne of True Greatness. For of late, you must have observed, True Greatness is seldom of British birth; it gives one so

much a better chance of maintaining one's superiority if one admires an untranslated Scandinavian dramatist or a Bohemian bard who can only be read with advantage in the Czech language.

For this purpose out-of-the-way tongues are clearly the best. Much could be done at first with Ibsen and Bjornson by the lucky few who could read Norwegian. Now they are translated, and are useless for any purpose save general culture. Why, even the sort of people who only go to theatres can admire *Hedda Gabler*! Provençal was safe for a time, and almost gave rise to a developed Mistral-cult, till young ladies who knew no foreign language but French discovered that a little work with a Provençal grammar put them at once in a position to read *Mircio*. Then Provençal was doomed, and Welsh or Irish had a chance for Greatness. I fancy I also detect a fall in Russians. But Roumanian is still extremely good business, and there are very fine pickings in Finnish and Hungarian; while the man who discovers the literature of Sind, I have not a doubt, will make himself famous.

On the other hand, though most really great work (as opposed to what is only just Truly Great) gets itself noticed sooner or later by a few appreciative critics, it is curious to observe what storms of indignation it always seems to rouse in the breast of the Stereotyped Reviewer. A certain tone of bitter wrath directed against new work is to me almost invariably a sign of real merit and promise in the object that arouses it. I am not musical; but I remember years ago, when the voice of the Wagnerite was first heard in the land, I used to say frequently, "I'm sure this man Wagner writes something new and something great in music; because—people hate him so." Mere mediocrity and positive incapacity never rouse anger; genius

in fresh or unexpected directions rouses it to a white heat of speechless and foaming wrath. (Not for worlds will I erase one word of that excellent mixed metaphor. Mixed metaphor is language, and the objection to it arises from ignorant writers, insufficiently acquainted with the meanings of words.) You never heard anybody get angry with Poet Close or with poor old Tupper; one smiled at them compassionately. But I can remember when the name of Browning disturbed the peace of families; and later when to say you admired Meredith was the signal for an outburst of unmeaning vituperation. So, too, I am even old enough to recollect the day when people declared spitefully that Tennyson was nothing but a plagiarist and parodist of Keats and Shelley, just as they tell me now that William Watson "finds and not fashions his numbers" by the simple process of taking them ready-made from Tennyson and Wordsworth, or even (God save the mark!) from his own lesser contemporaries. The way the dramatic critics at first fell foul of Ibsen was enough in itself to show any rational animal that a great dramatic writer had been born full-fledged into our modern Europe; while the frenzy with which the old-fashioned art-critic flings himself now on the prostrate forms of some promising artists is indication enough of how the wind will blow to the discerning observer of rising talent. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. There are critics, indeed, to whom I attach unique importance in this way, as reversed finger-posts. You should listen respectfully to all they say, and where they curse loudest, expect a blessing.

The worshippers of the Truly Great have oftenest for the object of their cult Rising Greatness. The Risen Great, whom everybody can admire, they disdain as unworthy their exalted consideration. But sometimes they go

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ray after some Will-o'-the-Wisp. Yet even at the worst, they are misled by the fervour of an honest admiration; while self-styled criticism often loses its head at sight of the red rag of a New Note in art or literature.

Above all, what men hate more than all else in the world is the writer who teaches them a fresh moral lesson. For that offence they know but one penalty: they crucify him on Calvary.



FIDO.

"WHICH IS 'IS 'EAD AND WHICH IS 'IS TAIL, BILLIE?"
"I DUNNO. PINCH 'IM, AND SEE WHICH END OF 'IM BARKS."



"'Oo was the cove you was talking to last Sunday morning at the Fox and Grapes?"

"I dunno; what was he like?"

"'E 'ad a collar on."



Old Gent : "DO YOU KNOW, BOY, THAT IS A VERY BAD HABIT?"

Twelve-year-old : "YES, I KNOW IT; I'VE TRIED FOR YEARS TO BREAK MYSELF OF IT, BUT IT'S NO USE."



GHETTO WAYS.



"AUGUSTUS, GIVE ME CHANGE FOR A THREEPENNY-PIECE; I WANT TO GIVE THIS PORTER A GRATUITY."



MASQUERADE STUPIDITIES.

ROMEO AND LITTLE BUTTERCUP.



"WAS THERE A DOCTOR WITH YOUR FATHER WHEN HE DIED?"
"NAY, HE JUST DIED HIS SELF."

B E R T R A M .

By RICHARD PRYCE.

THE rector turned upon his other side and closed his eyes. The night was oppressive, but he was unaccustomed to London, and perhaps after all it was that. At home he fell asleep as soon almost as his head touched the pillow. This pillow was very hard. He had shaken it up more than once.

Cabs rattled by in the street below. There were other noises too. Would the night of rest and sleep never begin? A woman was screaming drunken snatches of a song; costermongers were shouting their wares. It was the flaring lights of their barrows that flickered round the edges of the badly fitting blind, and played in one spot on the ceiling.

Down at home the peace of inaction had long since fallen upon the valley. The line of the Welsh hills was clear perhaps against the sky where the stars glowed like precious stones, each with a heart of flame. There would be breezes stirring in the trees round the Rectory. An owl would hoot, perhaps, or a cow low in the distance, or a sheepbell tinkle in the meadow below the church. The house itself would be very still. In the nursery the breathing of the sleeping boys was marking time gently as he had so often heard it when, with shaded candle, he crept in on tiptoe to look at them the last thing at night. How well he knew the sound, the even beat of their healthy breathing, inaudible almost at first, but to be heard plainly if you stood still and listened. If you waited a few moments, one or other boy would stir

languidly in his sleep, with a deep-drawn sigh that was yet full of contentment, and a strong little arm would be thrust out above the counterpane. Then (if you were the boy's father and if the night was cold) you would tenderly draw the bedclothes up once more about the sturdy little sleeper, and perhaps you would kiss the little freckled hand first. And certainly if the movement was accompanied by a grinding of the little teeth (that were so white and even when you saw them) you would whisper, "Don't grind your teeth, my darling." Sometimes you caught a few muttered words. It was Bertram, the little "dark horse" (whom in your heart of hearts you loved the best for something about him which you could only describe as the mystery of him), talking in his sleep. Perhaps you tried to hear what he said, but you never found (as you knew you would have found had it ever been Hugh who dreamed aloud) that he was engaged in re-enacting merely the things of the day, the game of cricket or the hunting in the woods for the thousand treasures for which you hunted in the woods yourself when you too were six years old, or what prank might be; for Bertram always did the unexpected, and in his sleep he wandered in strange places. Or there was a start and a cry and a sitting up with open eyes, that stared in terror at your shaded light. Then, putting it down, you ran to the bed and clasped your little frightened son to your heart, and soothed and pacified him, and felt, with your arms about him, that your heart itself must burst

for the very love you bore him—the love you bore them both. For you never admitted you loved Bertram best.

There was a night the rector could remember when, having calmed Bertram of the fears with which a childish nightmare had besieged him, he sat with his son in his arms watching the laughter bubble up through the tears that hung on the long lashes as he distracted the boy's thoughts from the fancies that had troubled them. The rector talked of the picnic Bertram was to have on his birthday. He would take him and Hugh for a day on Red Mountain (the hill you could see from the Rectory windows).

Bertram's face grew grave again.

"Vere were mountains in it."

(All his *th's* were *v's* or *f's*.)

"In what, dear?"

"In my dream. I fought I was a 'normous long way off, and . . . and everyfing was so big."

"Even my little son."

"No, but I'd got to hold everyfing."

"What do you mean?"

Bertram shook his round head. He could not explain. Besides, he wanted to forget. Panic lay in the thing he could not express.

"Does God send dreams, father?"

"God orders all things, my boy."

"But bad dreams?"

The rector smiled to himself.

"Your little feet are cold," he said, and took them into his hand.

Bertram was not satisfied.

"But," he began . . .

"In old times," said the rector somewhat hurriedly, "dreams were to be interpreted. You remember about Joseph and Pharaoh's dream, and Daniel and the dream of Nebuchadnezzar."

Bertram remembered quite well.

"Dreams don't come true now, do vey?"

"No, my boy."

"Why don't vey?"

"God speaks to us in other ways."

"He could make dreams come true. I dreamt——"

"What?"

But Bertram was a gentleman, and hesitated.

"Tell me."

"I dreamt you gave me sixpence last night."

The rector broke into a happy laugh.

"A dream," he said, "that shall come true to-morrow morning."

"Ven you can make dreams come true," said Bertram gravely. "You can help God, can't you?"

"You funny, funny little boy!" said the rector, and then the misgiving seizing him that Bertram was his best beloved, he woke Hugh too to take him on his other knee, that his love might go out to them equally.

His beautiful boys! How had he brought himself to leave them and his quiet Welsh home to come up to the turmoil and racket of this London, that would not give him sleep? The dingy room in which he was lying overlooked the noisy thoroughfare. He had come to this hotel in Covent Garden because it was cheap, and because he had once stayed here as a youth. He did not remember to have found it so dingy, so noisy, or so depressing then. He was himself out of sorts, perhaps. . . .

He turned on to his back. The first day of his holiday did not augur well. He had not set foot in the capital for twenty years. He had come up now to shake off some of the cobwebs of the country. He had vegetated too long. He meant to see and to do a great deal. To-morrow there would be St. Paul's and the Abbey. He thought of a boyish visit to the Cathedral with his own father, and of the won-

der of the dome, and his awe before the statue of Dr. Johnson. He remembered the old Dean's chuckle when his son asked ingenuously whether Dr. Johnson always dressed like that. Why had he not brought his own two sons? How much there would have been to show them: Madame Tussaud's, the Zoological Gardens, the Crystal Palace, the Polytechnic—no, that, he believed, was closed. But the stuffy hotel and this unsavoury part! He was glad to think they were safely sleeping at home in the nursery.

The room was very hot. The rector rose and threw up his window. Then he stood at it for some minutes, looking down into the street below. It was twelve o'clock; the hour boomed out from Big Ben as he stood there, and was repeated in various tones from many towers and steeples. The noise was subsiding. The theatres had emptied half an hour since, and the crowds were dispersing. The costermongers began to extinguish their hanging lamps. Some young men came arm in arm down the street, jostling the passers-by. Their loud laughter jarred upon the rector's nerves.

He thought again of the peaceful valley and the sleeping Rectory. An organ playing before a public-house stopped abruptly in its tune. The sudden ceasing of a sound which had been insistent arrested his attention. It made him think of a life cut short, of a living thing struck down. He shivered unaccountably, and went back to bed. By one o'clock there was some semblance of quiet in the street. The people had cleared off, and those who had indulged in their usual Saturday night excess were making horrible their homes. At two o'clock the rector was still waking; at three he slept.

At four he woke with a cry on his lips. He sat up and rubbed his eyes. They were wet, and he was shaking. He had seen the body of one of his sons being borne up the Rectory

garden. A trail of glistening drops marked its course along the gravel path. (A river ran through the paddock below the copse.) Bertram or Hugh was drowned. The rector's hand went to his mouth convulsively. Bertram or Hugh, he knew not which, but one or other was dead. Then he knew that he had been dreaming, and he broke into sobs. A dream only, praise God for that! But what a terrible dream! It had been so real. He had seen one of the little hands hanging down, and he had seen the water shine as it caught the light in dripping from the fingers. A horrible fear seized him; in a moment it had a grip of him. "My God, my God!" he said, and sprang from his bed.

He looked at his watch. It was three minutes past four. He would learn that at four o'clock on that Sunday morning Bertram or Hugh . . . He fell on his knees and prayed. The thing must not be. Through his prayer there forced itself a recollection of stories he had heard. . . . Presently he grew calmer; tried to laugh at his fears; laughed at them; called them the voice of indigestion. Nevertheless he was shaken as one who has sustained a shock, and it was long before he fell asleep once more.

He woke with a heart of lead. He had dreamt the hideous dream again. He knew then that the thing was true; he felt it through and through: Bertram or Hugh was dead.

He lay for a time paralysed under the weight of the conviction that overmastered him. He seemed robbed of the power of coherent or consecutive thought. His limbs felt so heavy that, without being conscious of thinking of them, he wondered that the frail bedstead supported them without creaking. The sheet and counterpane—he had removed the blankets long since in the sultriness of the summer night—were like a sheet and a counterpane of metal.

It was broad daylight now outside the shabby blind. The rector's eyes wandered about the room. He saw his clothes neatly folded on the chair where he had put them ; his Bible on the painted chest of drawers, the two horrid vases on the mantelpiece. Awful little room ! The dingy spirits of all the nameless birds of passage who had paused here in their course seemed to haunt it. Sin was in it, and disease. A thousand had slept before him in this bed. Horrible bed ! Oh, ten times terrible room ! Bertram was dead, or Hugh, and then . . . what matter, since all must die ?

His watch out of a deathly silence that had fallen ticked with thunderous ticking. He looked over at its big gold disc, where it stood on the dressing-table. Had some shaking of the house set it going, or could it be that it had ticked all night ? Impossible, for then he could not have slept ; and he had slept, or he could not have dreamed. The noise seemed cumulative to a point, when of a sudden—so it seemed to the rector—it fell to its normal proportions. Then the numbness left him. He rose and slid into his dressing-gown and slippers, and made his way along the silent passage, with the many doors, and down the stairs to the coffee-room. He went to one of the windows and pulled up the blind. The light showed the deserted room in all its bareness. The cloth on more than one table was stained with tea or wine. The cruet-stands, with their dull bottles, each soiled at the mouth with its own contents, were as symbols of the life that was led around them. Some empty soda-water bottles lay on the sideboard. The rector's foot knocked against a cork upon the floor. There was a smell of smoke. It hung oppressively round the faded curtains. On the mantelpiece, and reflected in the great looking-glass that was spotted and pit-marked as one whose face bears the

ravages of disease, lay a row of railway time-tables. Thither the rector went. He chose out the book he needed and walked with it to the window. A policeman stood still as death in a doorway opposite ; a cat was lying out in the middle of the road. He wondered whether both were sleeping. Was it yesterday that he had arrived in London ? It seemed like ten years since the cab put him down at the entrance to the hotel, or ten thousand years, or ten minutes. His fingers trembled as he sought out the page, and when he had found it the letters and figures danced before his eyes. It was several seconds before they settled themselves into their places and he could gain the information he had come to seek.

He went back to his room ; and though he had some hours to wait, he began to pack his portmanteau hurriedly. He had taken everything out of it the night before, and his clothes lay in the chest of drawers arranged with the methodical precision that characterised all that he did. His holiday was to have lasted a fortnight. When he had finished his packing he went to the bath-room, the whereabouts of which he had been at some pains to learn from the chambermaid on his arrival. He returned refreshed, but still without a gleam of hope. The hand of God was upon him. He bowed his head.

He looked shrunken and aged when he had finished his toilet. He had shaved himself with a care as scrupulous as if the reading-desk and the pulpit were to be his lot instead of the dusty train. He could not remember to have travelled on Sunday for many an orderly year, but he had not any misgivings on the score of the Sabbath-breaking that he contemplated that day.

The waiter looked at him with some surprise when he asked for his bill. He trusted the room had been comfortable.

"Quite comfortable."

The chambermaid commented upon his stricken appearance. He put her in mind, she said to the "boots," of the man who shot himself in No. 11 the year before last.

The rector, it chanced, had slept in No. 11. The chambermaid never could abear that room. It always gave her the creeps, and she wouldn't care to sleep in it—not herself, she wouldn't. Why, it hadn't even been repapered, and there was a mark on the wall where the bullet struck after passing through the "deceased's" head. The "boots" was new to the hotel, and the chambermaid enlarged upon the inquest and the part she had played in it.

The rector reached Paddington an hour too soon. He telegraphed to his housekeeper for news, directing that her answer should await him at Shrewsbury, but he had little expectation of finding it there. It was Sunday, and the Rectory was some miles from a telegraph office. He paced the platform. The time wore itself out like a pain. . . . Then came the interminable journey. He sat in the empty carriage and looked out of the window with eyes that saw nothing. His thoughts just then were for the most part of his boys' dead mother. Perhaps—who knew?—his own unspeakable loss was her gain. There were degrees of happiness, it might be, even in paradise.

Church bells sounded as the train sped past a village. They were in the same key as the peal at home. They rang out on the sunny afternoon. The day was bright with colour.

Suspense alternated with a dead weight of despair. As he neared Shrewsbury he felt faint and sick, and he buried his face in his hands.

But there was nothing for him. They were certain? Quite certain.

He knew not whether he was disappointed or relieved. Afterwards he could have given little

account of the three hours that passed before he reached his destination. He was leaning out of the window scanning the platform before the train stopped. A porter recognised him and ran to open the door.

"What, you, sir?"

"Tell me," said the rector, "tell me."

The man looked at him in question.

"What has happened at the Rectory?"

"The Rectory? I don't know, indeed."

"Has there been no accident?"

"Accident?"

The rector was trembling now from head to foot.

"Not as I know, anyhow. You're bad, sir, aren't you? Lean on my arm."

"I . . . don't know what's the matter with me," said the rector. He seemed stupefied.

"You'd better come into Mr. Morris's an' sit down, sir."

"I must get home. Can I have Morris's cart?"

Tom Morris, who drove the rector home, said that he never saw parson so strange before. He had something to tell, too, of the rector's meeting with his two little boys. . . . "O—oh!" he said, and "Yes, indeed!" which exclamations he repeated many times that evening in the village. The rector had laughed and cried like a girl.

But it was Bertram who behaved strangely in the next few days. He was nervous and furtive. The servants talked before him, and he had always been an odd little boy. It is supposed that what he heard preyed upon his mind. He looked queerly at Master Hugh, the housekeeper said.

The little boys were playing in the garden as on that Sunday evening when the rector laughed and wept over them. He was in his study reading. Nine days had passed, and he was

recovering from the shock of his unaccountable panic. He looked up from his book. The boys were in the swing under the oak. The sound of their voices filled him with contentment. Presently he became conscious that the

sound had ceased. He read on. The empty swing when he looked over at it was slowly moving backwards and forwards. The evening was very peaceful. The rector felt drowsy.

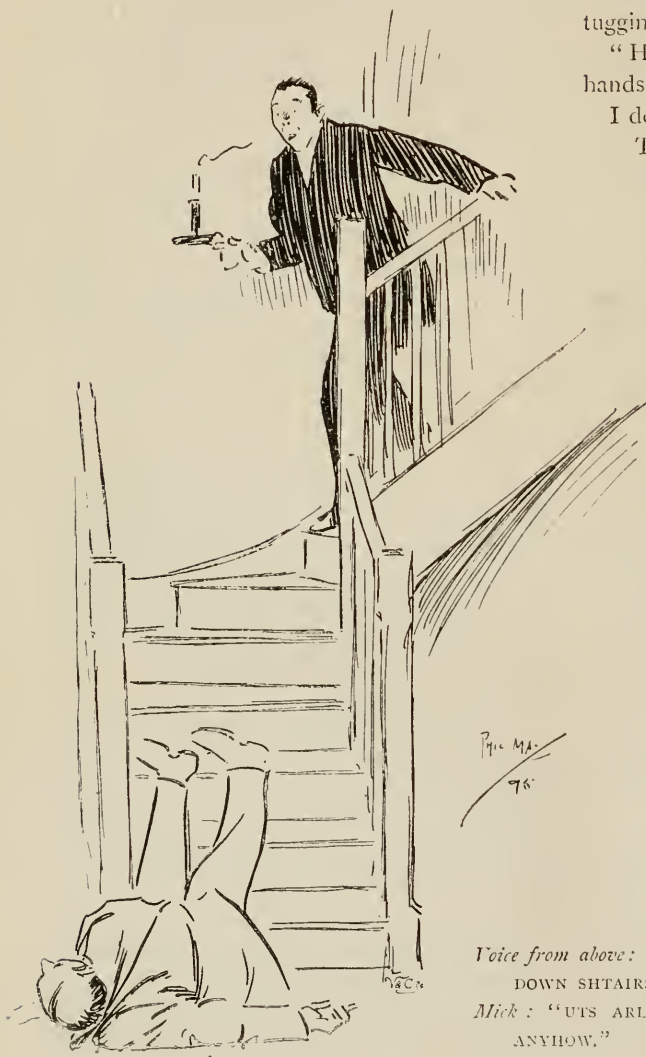
Out of the silence came the cries.

"Father! father!"

The rector started to his feet. Bertram was tugging at his arm. Something had happened.

"Hugh!" cried the little boy, clapping his hands in frenzy. "Hugh! I've pushed him in. I don't know why I did it."

They carried the little form up the gravel path. The sun was setting. Shapes were very definite. Swallows were circling high up in the blue. One of the little arms slipped and hung down, and the drops falling from the swaying hand caught the light and sparkled.



Voice from above: "WHIST, MICK, ARE YEZ FAALEN DOWN SHTAIRS?"

Mick: "UTS ARL ROIGHT, OI WAS COMIN' DOWN, ANYHOW."



BROTHER BRUSHES.

JACK LONGSTAFF.



"VAT 'AS BEEN YE MATTARE? ZEY TELL ME YOU 'AF NOT 'AD YE GOOT 'EALTH?"
"I DUNNO, BUT I THINK IT MUST HAVE BEEN BRAIN FEVER."



Jones: "FINE FELLOW THAT BROWN, ISN'T HE?"

Little Snooks: "YES, BUT IT'S BRAINS THAT TELL."



She: "WHAT LOVELY TURQUOISES THOSE WERE YOU SENT ME! BUT ARE THEY NOT EMBLEMS OF UNFAITHFULNESS, DARLING?"

He: "OH, NO, THEY'RE ALL RIGHT; THEY'RE NOT REAL."



Old Gent : "SAY, BOY, DO YOU KNOW WHAT SNOW IS?"
Boy (shivering) : "YE -YE-YES, IT'S CO--OO--OO -LD."



SOUVENIR OF HYÈRES.

THE ARGONAUTS OF THE AIR.

BY H. G. WELLS.

ONE saw Monson's Flying Machine from the windows of the trains passing either along the South Western main line or along the line between Wimbledon and Worcester Park;—to be more exact, one saw the huge scaffoldings which limited the flight of the apparatus. They rose over the tree-tops, a massive alley of interlacing iron and timber, and an enormous web of ropes and tackle, extending the best part of two miles. From the Leatherhead branch this alley was foreshortened and in part hidden by a hill with villas; but from the main line one had it in profile, a complex tangle of girders and curving bars, very impressive to the excursionists from Portsmouth and Southampton and the West. Monson had taken up the work where Maxim had left it, had gone on at first with an utter contempt for the journalistic wit and ignorance that had irritated and hampered his predecessor, and had spent (it was said) rather more than half his immense fortune upon his experiments. The results, to an impatient generation, seemed inconsiderable. When some five years had passed after the growth of the colossal iron groves at Worcester Park, and Monson still failed to put in a fluttering appearance over Trafalgar Square, even the Isle of Wight trippers felt their liberty to smile. And such intelligent people as did not consider Monson a fool stricken with the mania for invention, denounced him as being (for no particular reason) a self-advertising quack.

Yet now and again a morning trainload of season-ticket holders would see a white monster rush headlong through the airy tracery of guides and bars, and hear the further stays, nettings, and buffers snap, creak and groan with the impact of the blow. Then there would be an efflorescence of black-set, white-rimmed faces along the sides of the train, and the morning papers would be neglected for a vigorous discussion of the possibility of flying (in which nothing new was ever said by any chance), until the train reached Waterloo, and its cargo of season-ticket holders dispersed themselves over London. Or the fathers and mothers in some multitudinous train of weary excursionists returning exhausted from a day of rest by the sea, would find the dark fabric, standing out against the evening sky, useful in diverting some bilious child from its introspection, and be suddenly startled by the swift transit of a huge black flapping shape that strained upward against the guides. It was a great and forcible thing beyond dispute, and excellent for conversation; yet, all the same, it was but flying in leading strings, and most of those who witnessed it scarcely counted its flight as flying. More of a switchback it seemed to the run of the folk.

Monson, I say, did not trouble himself very keenly about the opinions of the press at first. But possibly he, even, had formed but a poor idea of the time it would take before the tactics

of flying were mastered, the swift assured adjustment of the big soaring shape to every gust and chance movement of the air; nor had he clearly reckoned the money this prolonged struggle against gravitation would cost him. And he was not so pachydermatous as he seemed. Secretly he had his periodical bundles of cuttings sent him by Romeike, he had his periodical reminders from his banker; and if he did not mind the initial ridicule and scepticism, he felt the growing neglect as the months went by and the money dribbled away. Time was when Monson had sent the enterprising journalist, keen after readable matter, empty from his gates. But when the enterprising journalist ceased from troubling, Monson was anything but satisfied in his heart of hearts. Still day by day the work went on, and the multitudinous subtle difficulties of the steering diminished in number. Day by day, too, the money trickled away, until his balance was no longer a matter of hundreds of thousands, but of tens. And at last came an anniversary.

Monson, sitting in the little drawing shed, suddenly noticed the date on Woodhouse's calendar.

"It was five years ago to day that we began," he said to Woodhouse suddenly.

"Is it?" said Woodhouse.

"It's the alterations play the devil with us," said Monson, biting a paper-fastener.

The drawings for the new vans to the hinder screw lay on the table before him as he spoke. He pitched the mutilated brass paper-fastener into the waste-paper basket and drummed with his fingers. "These alterations! Will the mathematicians ever be clever enough to save us all this patching and experimenting. Five years—learning by rule of thumb, when one might think that it was possible to calculate the whole thing out beforehand. The cost of it!

I might have hired three senior wranglers for life. But they'd only have developed some beautifully useless theorems in pneumatics. What a time it has been, Woodhouse!"

"These mouldings will take three weeks," said Woodhouse. "At special prices."

"Three weeks!" said Monson, and sat drumming.

"Three weeks certain," said Woodhouse, an excellent engineer, but no good as a comforter. He drew the sheets towards him and began shading a bar.

Monson stopped drumming, and began to bite his finger nails, staring the while at Woodhouse's head.

"How long have they been calling this Monson's Folly?" he said suddenly.

"Oh! Year or so," said Woodhouse, carelessly, without looking up.

Monson sucked the air in between his teeth, and went to the window. The stout iron columns carrying the elevated rails upon which the start of the machine was made rose up close by, and the machine was hidden by the upper edge of the window. Through the grove of iron pillars, red painted and ornate with rows of bolts, one had a glimpse of the pretty scenery towards Esher. A train went gliding noiselessly across the middle distance, its rattle drowned by the hammering of the workmen overhead. Monson could imagine the grinning faces at the windows of the carriages. He swore savagely under his breath, and dabbed viciously at a blowfly that suddenly became noisy on the window pane.

"What's up?" said Woodhouse, staring in surprise at his employer.

"I'm about sick of this."

Woodhouse scratched his cheek. "Oh!" he said, after an assimilating pause. He pushed the drawing away from him.

"Here these fools . . . I'm trying to conquer

a new element—trying to do a thing that will revolutionize life. And instead of taking an intelligent interest, they grin and make their stupid jokes, and call me and my appliances names.”

“Asses,” said Woodhouse, letting his eye fall again on the drawing.

The epithet, curiously enough, made Monson wince. “I’m about sick of it, Woodhouse, anyhow,” he said, after a pause.

Woodhouse shrugged his shoulders.

“There’s nothing for it but patience, I suppose,” said Monson, sticking his hands in his pockets. “I’ve started. I’ve made my bed, and I’ve got to lie on it. I can’t go back. I’ll see it through, and spend every penny I have and every penny I can borrow. But I tell you, Woodhouse, I’m infernally sick of it, all the same. If I’d paid a tenth part of the money towards some political greaser’s expenses—I’d have been a baronet before this.”

Monson paused. Woodhouse stared in front of him with a blank expression he always employed to indicate sympathy—and tapped his pencil-case on the table. Monson stared at him for a minute.

“Oh, *damn!*” said Monson suddenly, and abruptly rushed out of the room.

Woodhouse continued his sympathetic vigour for perhaps half a minute. Then he sighed and resumed the shading of the drawings. Something had evidently upset Monson. Nice chap, and generous, but difficult to get on with. It was the way with every amateur who had anything to do with engineering—wanted everything finished at once. But Monson had usually the patience of the expert. Odd he was so irritable. Nice and round that aluminium rod did look now! Woodhouse threw back his head, and put it, first this side and then that, to appreciate his bit of shading better.

“Mr. Woodhouse,” said Hooper, the foreman

of the labourers, putting his head in at the door.

“Hullo!” said Woodhouse, without turning round.

“Nothing happened, sir?” said Hooper.

“Happened?” said Woodhouse.

“The governor just been up the rails swearing like a tornader.”

“*Oh!*” said Woodhouse.

“It ain’t like him, sir.”

“No?”

“And I was thinking perhaps—”

“Don’t think,” said Woodhouse, still admiring the drawings.

Hooper knew Woodhouse, and he shut the door suddenly with a vicious slam. Woodhouse stared stonily before him for some further minutes, and then made an ineffectual effort to pick his teeth with his pencil. Abruptly he desisted, pitched that old, tried, and stumpy servitor across the room, got up, stretched himself, and followed Hooper.

He looked ruffled—it was visible to every workman he met. When a millionaire who has been spending thousands on experiments that employ quite a little army of people suddenly indicates that he is sick of the undertaking, there is almost invariably a certain amount of mental friction in the ranks of the little army he employs. And even before he indicates his intentions there are speculations and murmurs, a watching of faces and a study of straws. Hundreds of people knew before the day was out that Monson was ruffled, Woodhouse ruffled, Hooper ruffled. A workman’s wife, for instance (whom Monson had never seen), decided to keep her money in the savings bank instead of buying a velveteen dress. So far-reaching are even the casual curses of a millionaire.

Monson found a certain satisfaction in going on the works and behaving disagreeably to as

many people as possible. After a time even that palled upon him, and he rode off the grounds to every one's relief there, and through the lanes south eastward, to the infinite tribulation of his house steward at Cheam.

And the immediate cause of it all, the little grain of annoyance that had suddenly precipitated all this discontent with his life work was—these trivial things that direct all our great decisions!—half a dozen ill-considered remarks made by a pretty girl, prettily dressed, with a beautiful voice and something more than prettiness in her soft grey eyes. And of these half-dozen remarks, two words especially—"Monson's Folly." She had felt she was behaving charmingly to Monson; she reflected the next day how exceptionally effective she had been, and no one would have been more amazed than she had she learnt the effect she had left on Monson's mind. I hope, considering everything, that she never knew.

"How are you getting on with your flying-machine?" she asked. ("I wonder if I shall ever meet any one with the sense not to ask that," thought Monson.) "It will be very dangerous at first, will it not?" ("Thinks I'm afraid.") "Jorgon is going to play presently; have you heard him before?" ("My mania being attended to, we turn to rational conversation.") Gusto about Jorgon; gradual decline of conversation, ending with—"You must let me know when your Flying Machine is finished, Mr. Monson, and then I will consider the advisability of taking a ticket." ("One would think I was still playing inventions in the nursery.") But the bitterest thing she said was not meant for Monson's ears. To Phlox, the novelist, she was always conscientiously brilliant. "I have been talking to Mr. Monson, and he can think of nothing, positively nothing, but that Flying Machine of his. Do you know

all his workmen call that place of his 'Monson's Folly'? He is quite impossible. It is really very, very sad. I always regard him myself in the light of sunken treasure—the Lost Millionaire, you know."

She was pretty and well educated,—indeed, she had written an epigrammatic novelette; but the bitterness was that she was typical. She summarised what the world thought of the man who was working sanely, steadily, and surely towards a more tremendous revolution in the appliances of civilization, a more far-reaching alteration in the ways of humanity than has ever been effected since history began. They did not even take him seriously. In a little while he would be proverbial. "I *must* fly now," he said, on his way home, smarting with a sense of absolute social failure. "I must fly soon. If it doesn't come off soon, by God! I shall run amuck."

He said that before he had gone through his pass-book and his litter of papers. Inadequate as the cause seems, it was that girl's voice and the expression of her eyes that precipitated his discontent. But certainly the discovery that he had no longer even one hundred thousand pounds' worth of realizable property behind him was the poison that made the wound deadly.

It was the next day after this that he exploded upon Woodhouse and his workmen, and thereafter his bearing was consistently grim for three weeks, and anxiety dwelt in Cheam and Ewell, Malden, Morden, and Worcester Park, places that had thriven mightily on his experiments.

Four weeks after that first swearing of his, he stood with Woodhouse by the reconstructed machine as it lay across the elevated railway, by means of which it gained its initial impetus. The new propeller glittered a brighter white than the rest of the machine, and a gilder,

obedient to a whim of Monson's, was picking out the aluminium bars with gold. And looking down the long avenue between the ropes (gilded now with the sunset), one saw red signals, and two miles away an anthill of workmen busy altering the last falls of the run, into a rising slope.

"I'll *come*," said Woodhouse. "I'll come right enough. But I tell you it's infernally foolhardy. If only you would give another year——"

"I tell you I won't. I tell you the thing works. I've given years enough——"

"It's not that," said Woodhouse. "We're all right with the machine. But it's the steering——"

"Haven't I been rushing, night and morning, backwards and forwards, through this squirrel's cage? If the thing steers true here, it will steer true all across England. It's just funk, I tell you, Woodhouse. We could have gone a year ago. And besides——"

"Well?" said Woodhouse.

"The money!" snapped Monson over his shoulder.

"Hang it! I never thought of the money," said Woodhouse, and then, speaking now in a very different tone to that with which he had said the words before, he repeated, "I'll come. Trust me."

Monson turned suddenly, and saw all that Woodhouse had not the dexterity to say, shining on his sunset-lit face. He looked for a moment, then impulsively extended his hand. "Thanks," he said.

"All right," said Woodhouse, gripping the hand, and with a queer softening of his features, "Trust me."

Then both men turned to the big apparatus that lay with its flat wings extended upon the carrier, and stared at it meditatively. Monson,

guided perhaps by a photographic study of the flight of birds, and by Lilienthal's methods, had gradually drifted from Maxim's shapes towards the bird form again. The thing, however, was driven by a huge screw behind in the place of the tail; and so hovering, which needs an almost vertical adjustment of a flat tail, was rendered impossible. The body of the machine was small, almost cylindrical, and pointed. Forward and aft on the pointed ends were two small petroleum engines for the screw, and the navigators sat deep in a canoe-like recess, the foremost one steering, and being protected by a low screen, with two plate glass windows, from the blinding rush of air. On either side a monstrous flat framework with a curved front border could be adjusted so as either to lie horizontally, or to be tilted upward or down. These wings worked rigidly together, or, by releasing a pin, one could be tilted through a small angle independently of its fellow. The front edge of either wing could also be shifted back so as to diminish the wing area about one-sixth. The machine was not only not designed to hover, but it was also incapable of fluttering. Monson's idea was to get into the air with the initial rush of the apparatus, and then to skim, much as a playing card may be skimmed, keeping up the rush by means of the screw at the stern. Rooks and gulls fly enormous distances in that way with scarcely a perceptible movement of the wings. The bird really drives along on an aerial switchback. It glides slanting downward for a space, until it has gained considerable momentum, and then altering the inclination of its wings, glides up again almost to its original altitude. Even a Londoner who has watched the birds in the aviary in Regent's Park knows that.

But the bird is practising this art from the moment it leaves its nest. It has not only the

perfect apparatus, but the perfect instinct to use it. A man off his feet has the poorest skill in balancing. Even the simple trick of the bicycle costs him some hours of labour. The instantaneous adjustments of the wings, the quick response to a passing breeze, the swift recovery of equilibrium, the giddy, eddying moments that require such absolute precision—all that he must learn, learn with infinite labour and infinite danger, if ever he is to conquer flying. The flying machine that will start off some fine day, driven by neat “little levers,” with a nice open deck like a liner, and all loaded up with bomb-shells and guns, is the easy dreaming of a literary man. In lives and in treasure the cost of the conquest of the empire of the air may even exceed all that has been spent in man’s great conquest of the sea. Certainly it will be costlier than the greatest war that has ever devastated the world.

No one knew these things better than these two practical men. And they knew they were in the front rank of the coming army. Yet there is hope even in a Faint Hope. Men are killed outright in the reserves sometimes, while others who have been left for dead in the thickest corner crawl out and survive.

“If we miss these meadows——” said Woodhouse presently in his slow way.

“My dear chap,” said Monson, whose spirits had been rising fitfully during the last few days, “we mustn’t miss these meadows. There’s a quarter of a square mile for us to hit, fences removed, ditches levelled. We shall come down all right—rest assured. And if we don’t——”

“Ah!” said Woodhouse. “If we don’t!”

Before the day of the start, the newspaper people got wind of the alterations at the northward end of the framework, and Monson was cheered by a decided change in the comments

Romeike forwarded him. “He will be off some day,” said the papers. “He will be off some day,” said the South Western season ticket holders one to another; the seaside excursionists, the Saturday to Monday trippers from Sussex and Hampshire and Dorset and Devon, the eminent literary people from Woking and Hazlemere, all remarked eagerly one to another—“He will be off some day,” as the familiar scaffolding came in sight. And actually, one bright morning, in full view of the ten-past-ten train from Basingstoke, Monson’s flying machine started on its journey.

They saw the carrier running swiftly along its rail, and the white and gold screw spinning in the air. They heard the rapid rumble of wheels, and a thud as the carrier reached the buffers at the end of its run. Then a whirr as the Flying Machine was shot forward into the networks. All that the majority of them had seen and heard before. The thing went with a drooping flight through the framework and rose again, and then every beholder shouted or screamed, or yelled, or shrieked after his kind. For instead of the customary concussion and stoppage, the Flying Machine flew out of its five years’ cage like a bolt from a crossbow, and drove slantingly upward into the air, curved round a little, so as to cross the line, and soared in the direction of Wimbledon Common.

It seemed to hang momentarily in the air and grow smaller, then it ducked and vanished over the clustering blue tree-tops to the east of Coombe Hill, and no one stopped staring and gasping until long after it had disappeared.

That was what the people in the train from Basingstoke saw. If you had drawn a line down the middle of that train, from engine to guard’s van, you would not have found a living soul on the opposite side to the Flying Machine. It was a mad rush from window to window as

the thing crossed the line. And the engine-driver and stoker never took their eyes off the low hills about Wimbledon, and never noticed that they had run clean through Coombe and Malden and Raynes Park, until, with returning animation, they found themselves pelting, at the most indecent pace, into Wimbledon station.

From the moment when Monson had started the carrier with a "*Noze!*" neither he nor Woodhouse said a word. Both men sat with clenched teeth. Monson had crossed the line with a curve that was too sharp, and Woodhouse has opened and shut his white lips; but neither spoke. Woodhouse simply gripped his seat, and breathed sharply through his teeth, watching the blue country to the west rushing past, and down, and away from him. Monson knelt at his post forward, and his hands trembled on the spoked wheel that moved the wings. He could see nothing before him but a mass of white clouds in the sky.

The machine went slanting upward, traveling with an enormous speed still, but losing momentum every moment. The land ran away underneath with diminishing speed.

"*Noze!*" said Woodhouse at last, and with a violent effort Monson wrenched over the wheel and altered the angle of the wings. The machine seemed to hang for half a minute motionless in mid-air, and then he saw the hazy blue house-covered hills of Kilburn and Hampstead jump up before his eyes and rise steadily, until the little sunlit dome of the Albert Hall appeared through his windows. For a moment he scarcely understood the meaning of this upward rush of the horizon, but as the nearer and nearer houses came into view, he realized what he had done. He had turned the wings over too far, and they were swooping steeply downward towards the Thames.

The thought, the question, the realization were all the business of a second of time. "Too much!" gasped Woodhouse. Monson brought the wheel half-way back with a jerk, and forthwith the Kilburn and Hampstead ridge dropped again to the lower edge of his windows. They had been a thousand feet above Coombe and Malden station; fifty seconds after they whizzed, at a frightful pace, not eighty feet above the East Putney station, on the Metropolitan District line, to the screaming astonishment of a platformful of people. Monson flung up the vans against the air, and over Fulham they rushed up their atmospheric switchback again, steeply—too steeply. The busses went floundering across the Fulham Road, the people yelled.

Then down again, too steeply still, and the distant trees and houses about Primrose Hill leapt up across Monson's window, and then suddenly he saw straight before him the greenery of Kensington Gardens and the towers of the Imperial Institute. They were driving straight down upon South Kensington. The pinnacles of the Natural History Museum rushed up into view. There came one fatal second of swift thought, a moment of hesitation. Should he try and clear the towers, or swerve eastward?

He made a hesitating attempt to release the right wing, left the catch half released, and gave a frantic clutch at the wheel.

The nose of the machine seemed to leap up before him. The wheel pressed his hand with irresistible force, and jerked itself out of his control.

Woodhouse, sitting crouched together, gave a hoarse cry, and sprang up towards Monson. "Too far," he cried, and then he was clinging to the gunwale for dear life, and Monson had been jerked clean overhead, and was falling backwards upon him.

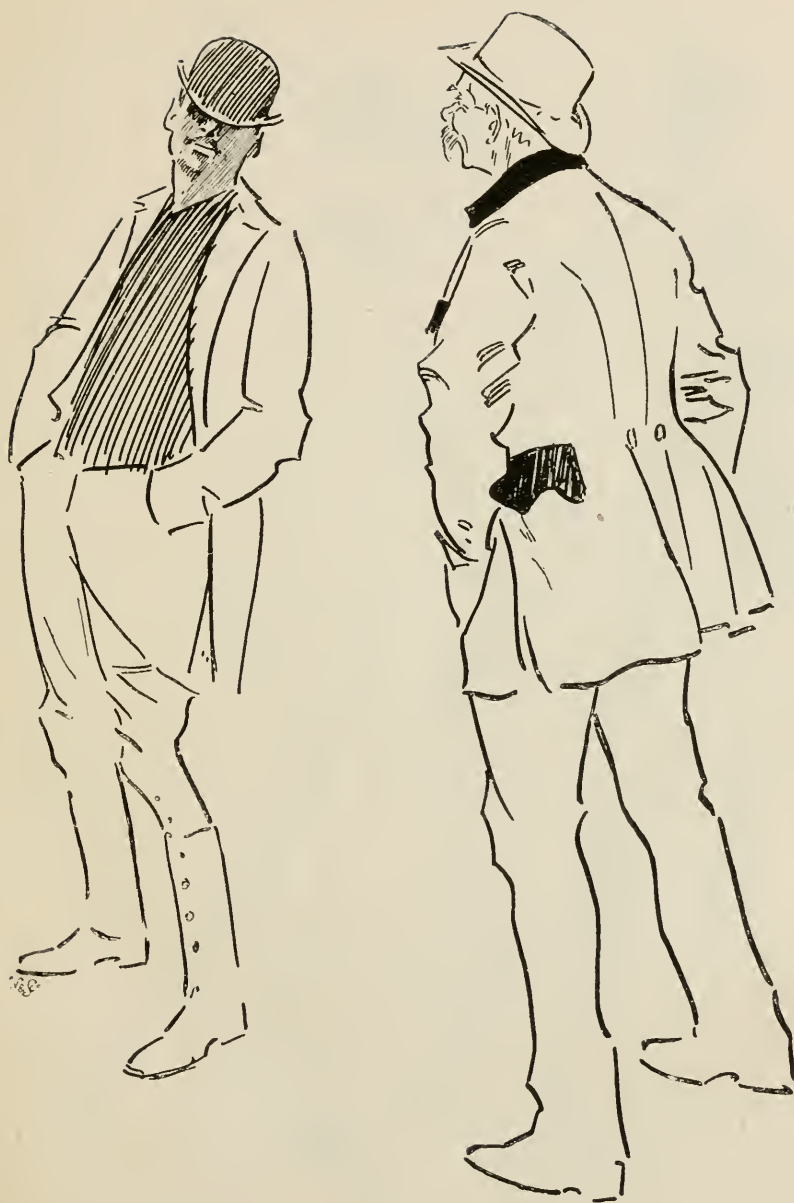
So swiftly had the thing happened that barely a quarter of the people going to and fro in Hyde Park, and Brompton Road, and the Exhibition Road saw anything of the aerial catastrophe. A distant winged shape had appeared above the clustering houses to the south, had fallen and risen, growing larger as it did so; had swooped swiftly down towards the Imperial Institute, a broad spread of flying wings, had swept round in a quarter circle, dashed eastward, and then suddenly sprang vertically into the air. A black object shot out of it, and came spinning downward. A man! Two men clutching each other! They came whirling down, separated as they struck the roof of the Students' Club, and bounded off into the green bushes on its southward side.

For perhaps half a minute, the pointed stem of the big machine still pierced vertically upward, the screw spinning desperately. For one brief instant, that yet seemed an age to all who watched, it had hung motionless in mid-air. Then a spout of yellow flame licked up its length from the stern engine, and swift, swifter, swifter, and flaring like a rocket, it rushed down upon the solid mass of masonry which was formerly the Royal College of Science. The big

screw of white and gold touched the parapet, and crumpled up like wet linen. Then the blazing spindle-shaped body smashed and splintered, smashing and splintering in its fall, upon the north-westward angle of the building.

But the crash, the flame of blazing paraffin that shot heavenward from the shattered engines of the machine, the crushed horrors that were found in the garden beyond the Students' Club, the masses of yellow parapet and red brick that fell headlong into the roadway, the running to and fro of people like ants in a broken ant-hill, the galloping of fire engines, the gathering of crowds—all these things do not belong to this story, which was written only to tell how the first of all successful Flying Machines was launched and flew. Though he failed, and failed disastrously, the record of Monson's work remains—a sufficient monument—to guide the next of that band of gallant experimentalists who will sooner or later master this great problem of flying. And between Worcester Park and Malden there still stands that portentous avenue of ironwork, rusting now, and dangerous here and there, to witness to the first desperate struggle for man's right of way through the air.





"WHAT'S UP WITH BILL? 'ES ALL OVER STICKIN' PLASTER."

"OH, 'E FORGOT 'ED TOOK 'IS SKATES OFF, AND TRIED TO WALK 'OME BACKWARDS."



Stranger: "How is it that there are so many widows about here?"
Local Wit: "I suppose it's 'cos their 'usban's is dead."



"SHE'S JUST ABOUT THE NEATEST, PURTIEST, AN' SWEETEAST DONAH IN THE WIDE, WIDE WORLD."
(Chevalier.)



Waiter : "ARE YOU PUDDING, SIR?"

Customer : "WHAT THE DICKENS DO YOU *mean*, SIR?"



Ikey Mo (to Snooks, who thinks he is knocking 'em in his new coat): "THAY, I'LL GIF YER TWO TOLLARS FE THAT OLD COAT."



7-17-95

Widow (ordering tombstone): "AND I DON'T WANT ANY MAUDLIN SENTIMENT ON IT; JUST PUT, 'DIED, AGE 75. "THE GOOD DIE YOUNG."'"

7/12 1875



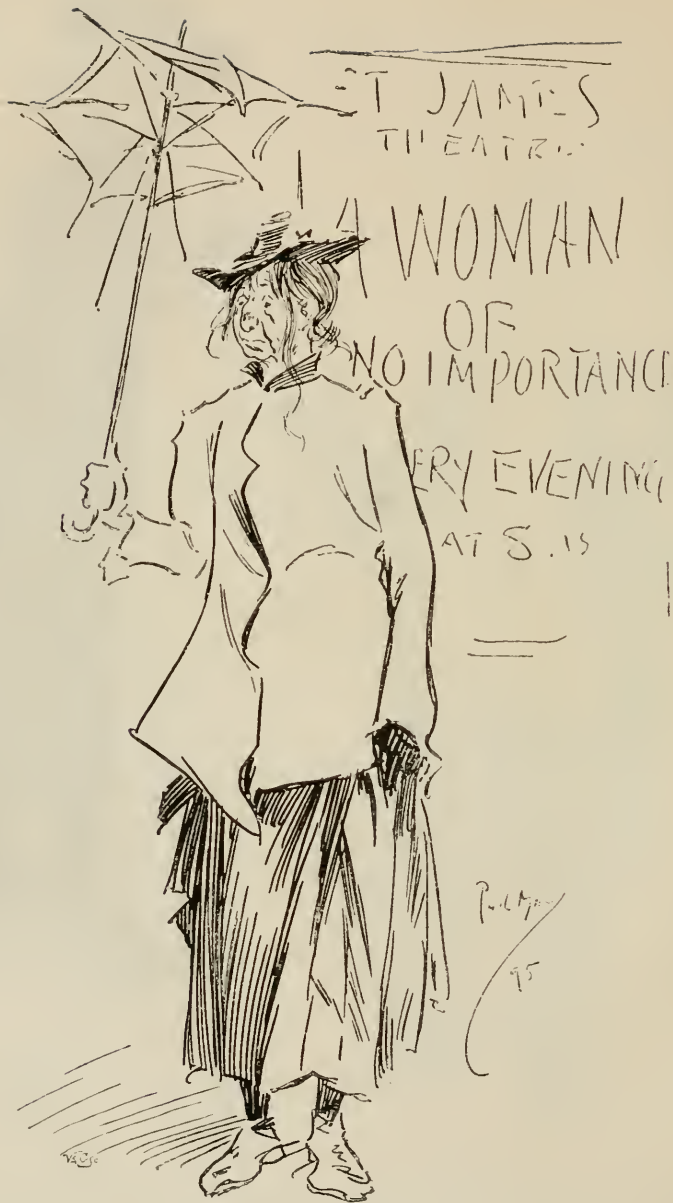
FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

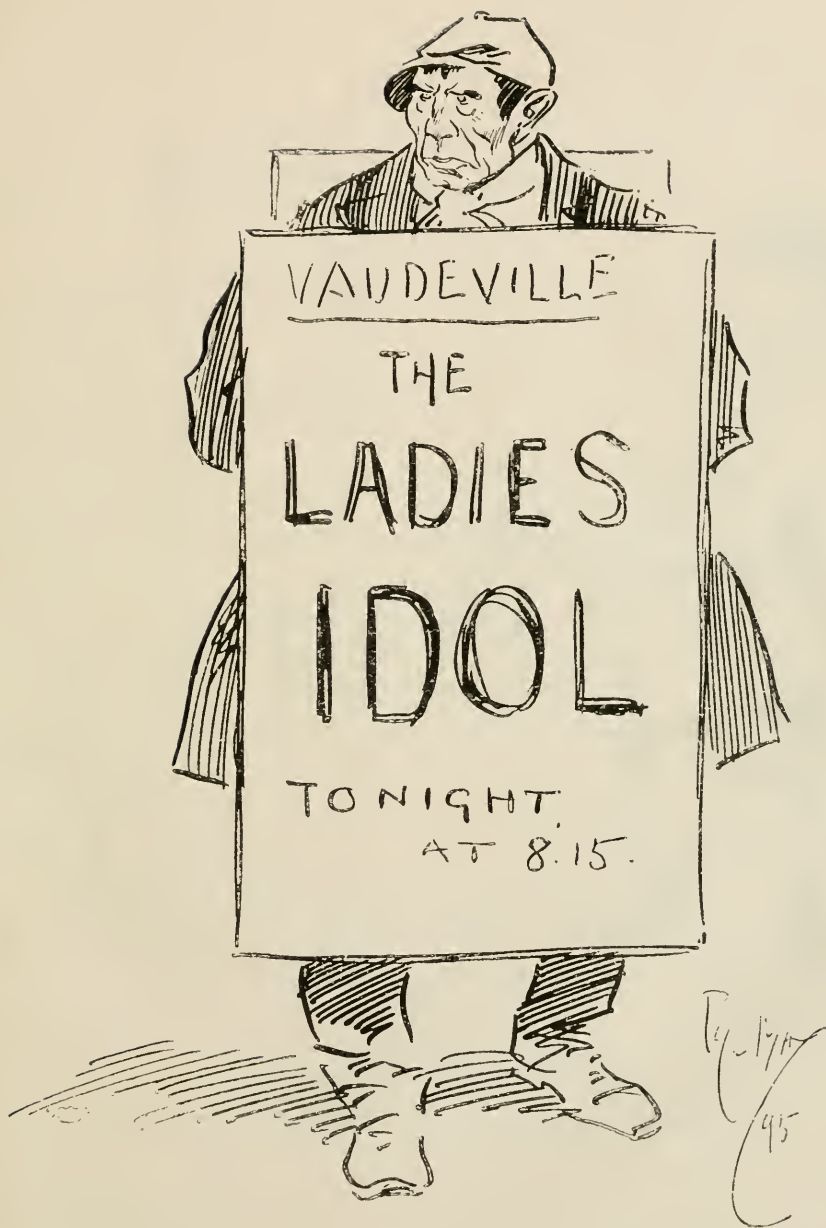


"YOU'VE BIN VERY *early* OF late ; YOU WAS ALWAYS *behind* BEFORE. IF YOU KAPE ON LOIKE THIS, YE'LL BE *furst* AT last."



Clergyman : "MY BOY, DO YOU KNOW IT'S WICKED TO FISH ON THE SABBATH?"
Youngster : "I ISN'T FISHIN'; I'M TEACHIN' THIS 'ERE WURM TER SWIM."





A WOMAN ON THE RIDGE.

BY WALTER RAYMOND.

SHE strode rapidly up the steep hill-side, and stopped at the edge of the pine-spinney upon the ridge.

She was quivering with emotion, breathless with haste, and she raised her white hand above her eyes and stared through the deepening twilight far away across the moor.

The clumps and patches of gorse were already black as ink, and the gloom of night and solitude was settling upon the wide stretch of purple ling. For the sun had sunk below the rim of earth; and the heavy masses of overhanging cloud were underlit blood-red, with a momentary passionate splendour. It gleamed upon the tall stems of the ragged, weather-beaten pines. It shone upon this woman—upon her wealth of auburn hair, her eager face, with the parted, expectant lips, and the ivory of her uncovered neck.

In fear or passion she had run up from the house whose chimneys peered between oak-trees in the glen below. The short, loose sleeve of her evening dress fell across the elbow of her upraised arm.

Then she turned her head to listen.

There was no moving thing along the miles of moorland road; and no sound but the whistle of a curlew passing overhead, and the faint cawing of distant rooks.

She drew a deep sigh. Then in a voice very low, but with slow and clear articulation, she put into words the conviction:—

“Then he has gone.”

She told herself this truth, and her heart accepted it with a sudden throb of joy, as of relief from a passing discord in the symphony of life.

“He said, ‘Then we must part,’ and he has gone.”

There was something of contempt in this first thought of the husband whose grasp had not been strong enough to hold and bend her to his will. Then came a firmer grip upon the fact. In a sudden outburst of despair she threw herself upon the ground, so smooth and dry beneath the pines, and sobbed and sobbed.

“He has gone! He has gone! He has gone!”

But if he were wanting, what of herself? There was humiliation in the thought that any man who once had loved could leave her. That were weakness in her womanhood, indeed. And he *had* loved her once. Since he rode away that morning with the threat upon his lips—a threat which then she laughed to scorn—for he dared not go—a thousand recollections of a lost romance came crowding through her mind, and crept so near her heart that she put on the pale blue gown with the pearl *passementerie* because he had once said he liked it.

Ten to one he had been too blind to see.

“So he has gone. Oh! let him go, by all means, with his austere ways, and the frown which cast a shadow of cold disapproval upon

everything in life. Better left, than to live on like this. Better alone to face it out. Let them talk and laugh who will. The fools! So he has found the courage at last. He has dared to go—the coward! I hate him! I hate him!”

She hid her face upon her arms and cried with pride and rage.

Presently she raised her head
“Hark!”

Far away across the moor her ear could distinguish the dull thud of a horse's hoofs. Then he was coming, after all, and she had been a fool to harbour fears. She might have known he could not go—he, who dreaded talk and scandal more than death, whose heart was full of the pride of family and place. Well, she would meet him as she meant, at the corner where the road winds down into the valley. It was a relief, and she could breathe again. The sound came like an assuring voice to one in the agony of a nightmare.

She rose and shook the dried fir-spines from her gown.

The last gleam of sunset had faded from the sky, and long clouds hung dark and leaden along the horizon. Here and there she could still see the road winding like a thread of white upon the undulations of the moor; but it was too dark to detect an approaching figure, and she looked in vain.

The horse broke into a canter, then came near faster and faster, until the head and shoulders of the rider loomed above gorse and ling, and she saw that he was coming by the drove, and not upon the highway.

Then it was not her husband, after all.

Her heart beat fast. She knew of only one who came that way. She had waited for him often in that place, with all the eager joy of a forbidden love—and walked across the lonely

moor—or sat unseen beneath the shelter of the trees. But now in this crisis of her life she was afraid. He must pass along the ridge, and close under the spinney. As she now stood he must almost touch her skirt. She drew quickly back and hid herself behind a small thicket of thorns. She trembled with agitation, and drew closer under cover of the bushes. Then she whispered beneath her breath,—

“Oh, not to-night! Not to-night!”

As the horseman came near he drew rein, and walked his horse, still panting from the recent gallop, slowly by the pines. At the brow of the hill he stopped and looked down into the valley. A light from a window of the house gleamed between the branches of the oak-trees.

Not to-night. To-morrow—next week—when it was known to the world, and she was used to her shame—then let him come and take her, if he would.

Quite close to her they stood in the gathering darkness, horse and man, motionless and sombre as a statue of bronze.

She could divine what thoughts were passing through his mind, how he hesitated, weighing passion against prudence. But love must triumph. Her heart gladdened to feel she held him fast. Presently he would go down to the house, and finding no one there, disconsolate, ride home again. Then she would watch him pass, and creep indoors alone and think.

Suddenly his mind was made up. He turned his horse and rode quickly back the way he came.

What? Was he, then, wavering because people talked? For the people did talk, and that had been the cause of this morning's trouble.

At once she looked into the depths of her misery and solitude; if all were sacrificed, and then this man had not the heart. Then came

a moment of clear insight, and the story of her marriage passed before her mind full and clear as the vision which haunts the brain of a drowning man. How the thing had all happened as if by fate, and beyond her power to control.

She had never thought of the man who was to be her husband in that way.

She was so young, and picking daffodils to deck the Easter church, when he came down the wood to speak to her. Almost she was afraid he might be vexed to find her there. "They are better on the south side," he said, and together in the sunlight they walked along the ride. And then a thing too strange and inconceivable to be believed—he was talking to her of love. He, ten years older, whom people spoke of with wonder and she had always looked upon with awe, was pouring words of wild, extravagant passion into her ear. How he loved her! That without her he could not live. So that it seemed that this man's happiness was in her hands. And then the pride of it, that he had chosen her. And yet the doubt within her heart—as if her purpose halted and was not sure. But in the whirl of it, and before the spring was out, she was a bride, and wed, and left the little rectory beside the church for the mansion in the glen.

Then fresh experiences fell thick and fast upon her.

In a quicker life she learnt the might of womanhood, and she, too, was a queen whom all eyes followed when she moved. And as she gladdened in the revelry of her new-formed power, her husband's brow grew stern. The daffodils had passed with the spring. The simplicity of her girlhood was dead. The romance faded, and the passion grew cold upon his lips. Then she scorned him in her heart, for it seemed to her that he was the only man she could not move. And the coldness

made her life a winter. And over the solitude of that desolation, like the hopeless, unbroken cloud over a December moor, hung the thought that she had never loved, and never might—as she could love.

Was it her fault if there came a touch that thrilled and a whisper that sent the quick blood to her cheek? So that all sense and prudence was swept away in a flood of passion, which left no time for thought until this evening, in the moment of her misery, when her lover, pausing upon the ridge, turned rein.

How much did her husband know this morning when he said they must part? He must have gone to town; for he took nothing, but rode away without a word. And when they parted, would he let her keep the child?

Again she glanced towards the west; but ling and gorse were wrapt in darkness, and the road was hidden in the night.

"He has gone! He has gone!" she cried. "It is too late!"

In the agony of a black despair she called to him by name, imploring him to come back—to come back.

She would hasten to the house and write at once a letter of love and contrition that would bring him home. Let a man ride with it to the post, and he would get it in the morning.

Regardless of brambles, she ran out of the spinney and down the steep hollow into the glen. It was dark, and she tripped on the rolling stones and stumbled over the outcropping rock. But when she reached the level drive, she saw that the hall-door was open, and that a bright light was streaming across the lawn.

Then fell upon her ear the sound of a well-known voice.

"But where can your mistress be?"

"I don't know at all, sir. She has not gone out."

She paused one moment to regain her composure. Then she walked slowly up the steps.

She raised her arms with an air of languor, as of one worn out with waiting and a martyr to neglect.

"Well!" she said quite sweetly, ignoring the differences of the morning, "if I reach four-score, I will never again give myself a moment's anxiety about you as long as I live."

"But where have you been?" asked her husband quickly.

"Been? When you were so late, I strolled

up to the ridge to meet you, and there I have stayed this two hours, wondering whether you were alive or dead."

"Dear, dear," he replied regretfully. "I had to go to Undercombe, and so I came back the other way."

She stood there with the dignity of an empress, the lamp shining down upon the rich coils of her hair.

He stooped to pick something off the blue gown.

"You have brought in a fir-cone clinging to the lace," he said.



"NO SNOW FALLS
LIGHTER THAN THE
SNOW OF AGE.
YET NONE FALLS
HEAVIER, FOR
IT NEVER MELTS."



John May
1915.



Jones: "I NEVER BELIEVE IN ANYTHING I CAN'T UNDERSTAND."

The Rev. Molloy: "IN THAT CASE, MY FRIEND, I'M AFRAID YOUR CREED WILL BE EXTREMELY LIMITED."



MUSICAL NOTES.

MONDAY "POPS."



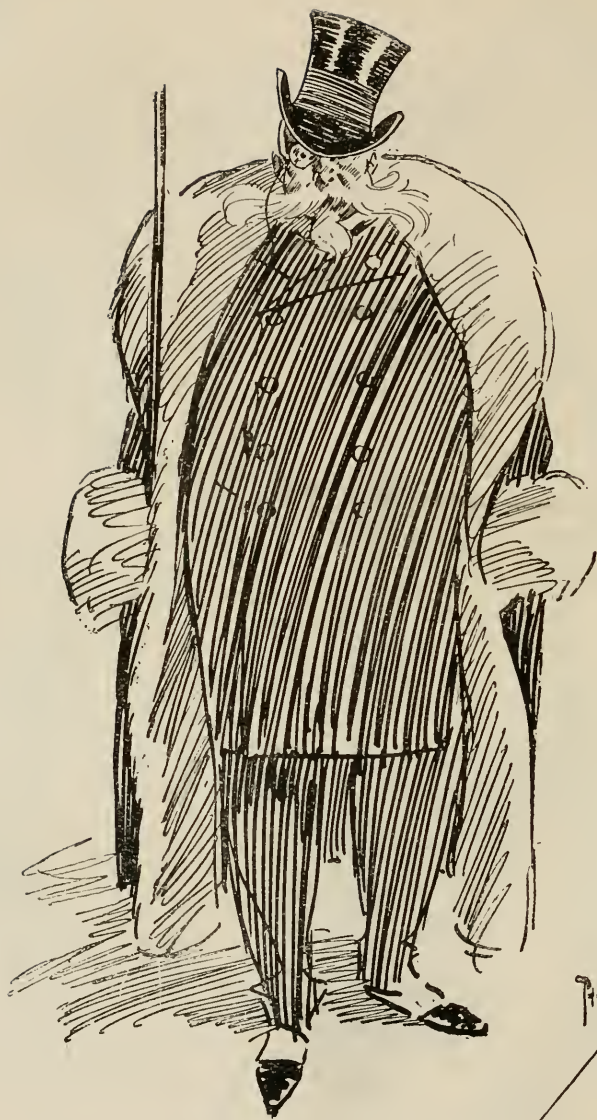
Theatrical Lodging-house Keeper: "Yes, I'M GLAD THEY'VE KNIGHTED 'ENERY IRVING. YOU SEE, IT'S A COMPLIMENT TO THE PERFESSION WHICH REFLECTS EQUAL HONOR ON US hall."



THINGS WE SEE
WHEN WE GO OUT
WITHOUT OUR GUNS."

P. 12 H.A.
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AT SCARBORO'.



Phil M. 73.



IN THE CITY.



A STUDY.



He: "WHAT IS your COSTUME?"

She: "THE SEA."

He: "AH, I see, LOW TIDE."

TRY
BOTTLES
PILLS
FOR FULNESS
AND SWELLING
AFTER
EATING.



1912 N.B.

HAS THE ENGLISH DRAMA RENASCED?

BY A. B. WALKLEY.

WHY not "renasce"? We say "coalesce," and "effervesce," and "acquiesce."

But if any purist objects to the neologism I offer him a personal apology, and pass on to say that I use the word of malice prepense in order that it may suggest an allusion to the title of Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's recent volume of essays, "The Renaissance of the English Drama." Mr. Jones's title begs the question which I propose to ask. Within the past ten years, in the opinion of Mr. Jones, there has been a great change wrought in the English theatre, a new departure and a new development, such a general transmogrification of theatrical affairs as can be called by no less a name than a renaissance, a new birth unto artistic righteousness. Now, I ask, Has the English drama renasced?

It was Mrs. Poyser, I think, who devoutly wished that all men might be born again—and born "different." Up to the present men, I believe, have obstinately refused to fulfil this pious aspiration. So the drama, it seems, has had to oblige. Nothing less was expected of it. The drama, you must have noticed, ranks with the Government, the weather, and our wealthy maiden aunt, as one of those institutions from which we are always expecting things. It is like an illustrious invalid: bulletins are always being posted up in public places about the state of its health—"weaker," or "sinking," or "as well as can be expected." The latest bulletin is "renasced." Even our university examiners are

always wanting to know about the drama. You remember, in the Cambridge ballad of "The Heathen Parsee," how they found in the candidate's hat, besides "the Furies and Fates and a delicate map of the Dorian States,"

" . . . Some notes on the rise of the drama,
A question invariably set."

Surely this persistent inquisitiveness is a little unseemly? Is its condition so much a national concern as all that? Does it really matter so very much how we spend our time after dinner, whether we kill it with *Don Quixote* or foot it merrily with *The Shop Girl*? Why do we play-goers take ourselves so seriously, subjecting ourselves to a preliminary examination of conscience before going to a theatre, as though we were going to church, and declaring solemnly that the time is out of joint because Dramatist No. One "has produced no great play within the past twelvemonth," or Dramatist No. Two "has not fulfilled the high expectations formed of him"? If an edict or an earthquake closed all our playhouses to-morrow, I submit that the great mundane movement would still go on. But no; the drama, it seems, matters. The playwrights affirm it, the players proclaim it, and the play-goers believe it. What could the drama do, so devoutly contemplated as it is, so eagerly discussed, so coddled, made so much of, but renasce? "It is my duty, and I will," says the drama, like Captain Reece, of "The Mantelpiece."

Before examining the actual condition of

the drama and attempting any diagnosis of its symptoms, I would point out that we should always be on our guard against what may be called the fallacy of modernity, the idea that there is something peculiar in our own times, something that gives them a special significance in the world's history. There is of course something peculiar in them, which thing is the circumstance that we happen to be alive. But this, it should chasten us to remember, is our affair, not the Time-spirit's. There is a great deal of human nature in those words of the Church Service, "not in *our* time, O Lord." "Our time, O Lord," is marked off for us from the time of every other generation. Yet every generation shared the same fallacy, and thought its own time, as we of to-day are so fond of saying, "epoch-marking." Somewhere about the year 1000, for instance, and at periodical intervals afterwards, everybody thought the world was coming to an end. To-day we attach enormous importance to the fact that the century is nearing its end, and think we have discovered a quite new set of ideas, follies, fashions, and diseases, called "century-end," as though there were some peculiar virtue in the fact that contemporary events here are taking place nearly nineteen hundred years after another event somewhere else, as though any other system of computing time would not have knocked our precious "century-end" into "the middle of next week." The same fallacy underlies our persistent overworking of "modern," "new," "up-to-date," a subject so nauseously hackneyed that I have not the heart to do more than allude to it.

This is the fallacy which predisposes us to believe that our time is peculiarly a time of renaissance. But the belief of course is not necessarily a mistaken belief. Looking backward, it is easy enough for us to see that the development of our drama, for instance, has not

been along a continuous straight line, but in a broken and an in-and-out curve. Where the curve reappears after a gap, and takes an upward trend, there you have what I suppose people to mean by this blessed word "renaissance." Obviously, the first of these moments occurs in the period of "Eliza and our James"; the second, again obviously, occurs in the reign of the Merry Monarch. The Elizabethan drama, the Restoration drama, give us drama in the renescent stage. To enumerate further moments of the kind would be tiresome and superfluous; these two moments ought to tell us all about a "dramatic renaissance" that we want to know, enough at any rate to enable us to recognise it when we meet with it again. At each of these moments, then, the drama expressed, *and was the one art that did express*, the national life, either as a whole (as in Shakespeare and Ben Jonson) or in part (as in Congreve and Vanbrugh), and current views about life. Observe, if you please, the statement I have italicised, you will see why in a jiffy. At each of these moments certain ideas emerged and took artistic shape through the medium of the drama, and through nothing else; the drama was then not only one of many ways of enunciating certain truths, of depicting certain sides of life: it was the only way. Shakespeare, as we know, took the mechanical portion of his plays from any source to hand: translations, chronicles, or older plays; but the live portion, the portion of ideas, was his own. The ideas of *Hamlet*, the ideas of *Othello*, were not to be found in any artistic form outside the Elizabethan playhouse; they were taken straight from life. So with Congreve; the ideas of *The Way of the World* were taken not from any other form of art, but straight from the court and "the town." At these moments, then, typical moments of dramatic renaissance, the drama differed not only in form—that it always

must do ; it is for that reason we have had to invent a special name for it—but in intellectual content, from any other kind of art. And it is only, I submit, when the drama does this, it is only when it has an intellectual content of its own, a store of ideas not to be found elsewhere in art, that it can be called a really live drama, a really efficient force. If drama merely expresses in its own way the ideas which other art forms—novels, pictures, and what not—are expressing in their way, if, to use a cant but convenient term, it has no special “message,” which but for its agency would remain undelivered, then it is not a really efficient force, it is not a motive power, but only a fifth wheel to the coach.

Now it is because, in the sense in which I have tried to fix on a definition of dramatic “life,” our English drama to-day does not seem to me to be really alive, that I think we are wrong to talk about its “renaissance,” a term which of course implies life, and not only life, but life at its fullest, a great stir and ferment of it. If we have indeed arrived at another moment of renaissance, as we are told, then I think we must ask to be shown the symptom that we know, and the symptom which I take to be the characteristic one in such cases ; we must ask whether our drama has its peculiar intellectual content, whether it is expressing ideas not expressed by any other form of art. It may be objected—and the objection is plausible enough to need meeting without more ado—that this is scarcely the function of the modern drama ; that the stage no longer has the monopoly of public discussion which it had in Elizabethan and Caroline times ; that the drama can no longer hope to invent and promulgate ideas of its own, but must be content with giving dramatic form to ideas which are the common property of all the arts. My answer to this ob-

jection is that the modern drama (though not in England ; that, you will presently see, is my point) *has* performed a special function in the intellectual world, *has* invented and promulgated ideas of its own. Consider the theatre of Dumas the younger, and you will find it pullulating with ideas which are peculiar to itself, or were peculiar until the novelists and the other artists laid hold of them. The idea of *La Bête*, the idea of *L'Homme Femme*, the idea of the *Vibration*, Thouvenin's idea of pre-nuptial chastity, Francillon's idea of conjugal tit-for-tat—I mention only a few at random—are all special Dumasian inventions, of his own coinage, and bearing his own image and superscription. Take away the Dumasian theatre, and you have subtracted something from the intellectual content of modern French literature. My other example must have occurred to you long before I state it—Ibsen, of course. This is a dangerous name in controversy, and the very fact that it is dangerous makes for my contention. Perhaps you dislike Ibsen. Then you have helped me to prove my case. For why do you dislike Ibsen? Surely not for his stage technique, which even his bitterest opponents admit to be admirable? Surely not for his dialogue or any other of his qualities as a literary artist? No ; you dislike him for his ideas. It is not the artist you dislike, but the thinker. And when you upbraid his admirers as Ibsenites, it is on account of the ideas they have welcomed in his plays, is it not? We all know (if we do not all understand) what these ideas are ; it would be too long and complicated a business to catalogue them. All that I want to insist upon is that they are Ibsen's ideas, that they give his theatre an intellectual content peculiar to itself. With Dumas *filis* and with Ibsen, then—there are other names, “foreign, I regret to say,” but these will suffice for my point—the drama has

performed a special function. It has expressed ideas not expressed in any other medium. To be sure, they have subsequently found their way into other media—into the novel, the pamphlet, the essay—but that is beside the question. I am for the time being dealing not with imitations, replicas, variants, but with inventions, originals, primitive stocks.

So far as I can see, there is nothing or next to nothing like this in our own stage of to-day. "What!" you say, "no ideas, with all our dramatists writing essays to explain themselves and their tendencies and their ideals in the monthly reviews, with all these discussions of first principles at play-goers' clubs, with all these 'problem plays,' which are setting everybody by the ears?" One moment, I beg. I do not say that our stage has no ideas; I say that the ideas which it has are not its own ideas, that it does not swell the volume, but only canalises the stream, of intellectual progress. Briefly, it tells us nothing that we did not know before. Théophile Gautier, writing in the days of Scribe, said that an idea never found its way on the stage until it was worn threadbare in newspapers and novels. That was true of the French stage fifty years ago; it is true, I think, of our own stage of to-day. Our dramatists seem to have no thoughts of their own; they only dramatise other people's thoughts. "After you with that idea!" one seems to hear them saying to novelist, sociologist, or pamphleteer. Our dramatists, do I say? Practically there are only three of them who count, who have been long before the public, who may be said to have given us the real measure of their capacity; they are of course—I name them in alphabetical order, to avoid the impertinence of qualitative classification—Mr. Grundy, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Pinero. Always these three! It is a little tiresome to have to execute varia-

tions on this perpetual triad as a *motif* whenever our contemporary drama is in question. But facts are facts, and this triumvirate represents our drama; what they are, it is; and if it has renasced, it is they who have accomplished the renascence. Let us then for a moment examine them as ideologues and see, if we can, what contributions they have individually made to the intellectual stock of to-day.

Mr. Grundy is an ingenious playwright, with a real scenic instinct, a keen eye for situations and effects, a master, too, of brilliant dialogue. In temperament he is John Bull at his best, of a downright, plain-spoken honesty, a hearty hater of shams and hypocrisies and "fads." Also he is a shrewd observer of life and character, in so far as his range of vision extends. He is a Sancho Panza, with better brains. But he is not an ideologue.

For what ideas of his own has he contributed to the common stock? In his earlier plays he never pretended to ideas of any sort; all he aimed at was the dexterous contrivance of an intrigue. From his later plays, in which, though not without evident reluctance, he has ventured upon ideas of some sort—because apparently he saw that the stage was tending idea-ward, and he felt he must march with the times—what do you gather? That to sow the wind in youth is to reap the whirlwind in old age, that there are some black sheep in journalism and some snow-white ones in Judaism, that marriage is not an ideally perfect institution, and that the laws of divorce cry aloud for amendment; what more? I can find nothing more, and in this little store I cannot find one idea which is the original property of Mr. Grundy. He has raised no social questions, offered no fresh individual solution of the problems of life and conduct; he has simply appropriated the questions of the day and dramatised the solu-

tions or others. About this time last year Madame Sarah Grand had set us all chattering about the "New Woman." The topic was beaten out thin in magazines and newspapers during the ensuing season. In the autumn, when the topic had staled, and everybody was heartily sick of it, Mr. Grundy brought out *The New Woman*. Sarah Grand, again, and the whole tribe of "Keynote" novelists had been battenning for months upon the marriage question. When the subject had been flung aside, an orange sucked dry, Mr. Grundy picked up the peel and gave us *Slaves of the Ring*. Never does he produce a fresh, original thought of his own. When we talk of the ideas of Dumas *fil's*, the Ibsenite philosophy, we all know more or less what is meant; but such a phrase as "the ideas" or "the philosophy of Mr. Grundy" has no meaning.

Mr. Jones is a very earnest man. He feels that life is serious and ought to have some meaning, if he could only find it out. He thinks, with Matthew Arnold, that the theatre wants "organizing"; and, with Sainte-Beuve, that it is not enough to be amused with art, but that we must be rightly amused; and, with Ruskin, that modern England sacrifices beauty, plain living, and high thinking to utility and money-getting and chimney-pot hats. As a playwright he is an idealist and a romantic, giving us in the region of practice excellent types of picturesque exaggeration in strong primary colours, and in the region of theory many intemperate and rather foolish sneers at "realism," which he does not understand, calling it "drains" and "kitchen middens" and other ugly names,

" . . . which is plenty, Dudley James."

He is a Don Quixote, with less absurd hallucinations; but he is not an ideologue.

That "it is impossible to contemplate the

Divine image in the person of the average British tradesman without an uneasy suspicion that the mould is getting a little out of shape" (*read*: that the British tradesman is not so suitable for the purposes of the romantic playwright as a potter or an astronomer); that, "as women cannot retaliate" (*i.e.* on unfaithful husbands) "openly, they *may* retaliate secretly—and *lie*"; that we ought to try and make London beautiful; that Puritans who object to low-necked dresses and the nude in art are often no better than they should be; that we should live the life according to nature—these are the ideas of Mr. Jones's later plays. But they are not peculiar to Mr. Jones. If his whole theatre were obliterated from men's minds, there would be no perceptible shrinkage in the world's stock of ideas. The philosophy of Mr. Jones? There is no such thing. Scraps of Ruskin and Matthew Arnold do not make an original contribution to philosophy.

There remains Mr. Pinero. Attention, please, and hats off! For Mr. Pinero is a real live dramatist; he can create characters whom we can walk round, and think of as we think of actual men and women. He can find the dramatic formula to represent the inner working of our minds, the throbbing of our nerves. In a word, he can do inside the playhouse much of what the novelists of to-day are doing outside it. He has given the drama a distinct lift, brought it into line with the other arts. But he is not an ideologue.

For none of his ideas, however new to the stage, are new to the world. He has contributed no independent thought of his own. The blue-book, the pamphlet, the newspaper, the novel, have all been beforehand with him. How many studies of the neuropathic *révoltée* had literature outside the playhouse not given us before Mr. Pinero brought her inside in *The Second Mrs*

Tanqueray? You might count them by the score. So with *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith*. The problem of extra-conjugal union which it propounds had been discussed for months past by all sorts of novelists and marriage reformers "all over the place." Can you attach any meaning to the phrase, "the philosophy of Mr. Pinero"? Yes; it is the philosophy of social conservatism, the creed that things, bad as they are, are best left alone. The creed may be right or wrong; I am not discussing the merits of Mr. Pinero's philosophy; all I want to point out is that it is not an original individual contribution to human thought. It is not entitled to be called "Pineroism," a distinct product of the man, as "Ibsenism" or "Dumasism" is a distinct product. Pineroism, Grundyism, Jonesism—they don't exist.

I have mentioned the three "only generals" of our dramatic army, and if my view be correct that no one of them is an initiator, a pioneer of thought, then I fail to see how it can be maintained that our drama has really renasced, has been born again to its old inheritance, has again known an originator as well as a disseminator of ideas. Mind, I do not say that we are not on the high-road to this happy event: the drama may be, to use the orthodox phrase in such matters, "in an interesting condition"; I only say that the new birth, so far as I can see, is not yet. . . . And even as I write these words I am half inclined to withdraw them, and so, you may think, give my whole case away, for the name occurs to me of one dramatist who has really invented his own ideas, as Alice's white knight invented his own helmet, who has really tried to make the drama a vehicle of original thought. I refer to the author of *Arms and the Man*. Many worthy people, I am aware, laughed very heartily at this play, under the impression that they were

enjoying an excellent farce. So they were, but underneath the farce was to be perceived, by those who had eyes for it, a strange life philosophy, paradoxical, if you like, fantastic, three-cornered, but still a philosophy and a new, an original one. It was concerned with a number of current, yet, as Mr. Bernard Shaw thinks, false, ideals, ideals of courage, love, truth, and so forth, and its aim was to show human beings stripping off these false ideals and "finding themselves." Good as the play was, there were all sorts of faults to be found with it from the view-point of technical dramatic criticism—Mr. Shaw is a tyro in play-writing, and suffers from inexperience like other men—but that is not the point. The point is that here was a play, the first, I think, for many a long year in England, which gave us ideas of its own, not ideas borrowed from a novel or any other artistic source. With half a dozen such plays as this to our account, we might, I think, begin to talk about a dramatic renaissance. But at present there is only this one play, and, as Made-moiselle Yvette Guilbert sings of something else, *c'est mince*.

And now I hope no one will think me so foolish as to be blind to a certain change in our drama because I have argued that this change does not amount to a renaissance. Our drama, whether that serious part of it which calls itself "art" or that lighter part which is content to call itself merely "amusement," is obviously a better, brighter, more vigorous thing than the drama of our fathers. The little finger of Grundy or Jones or Pinero is thicker than the loins of Tom Robertson or Tom Taylor, just as Albert Chevalier or Dan Leno is incomparably better than George Leybourne or the great Vance. And mention of these music-hall gentry reminds me that this term "renaissance," which I think it is premature to apply to the drama,

is indubitably applicable to the art of the music-hall ; for here the condition I have insisted upon, the condition of original ideas worked out in that form of art, and no other, is satisfied. Mr. Chevalier's "coster" ideas, some of Mr. Dan Leno's types, have been taken straight from

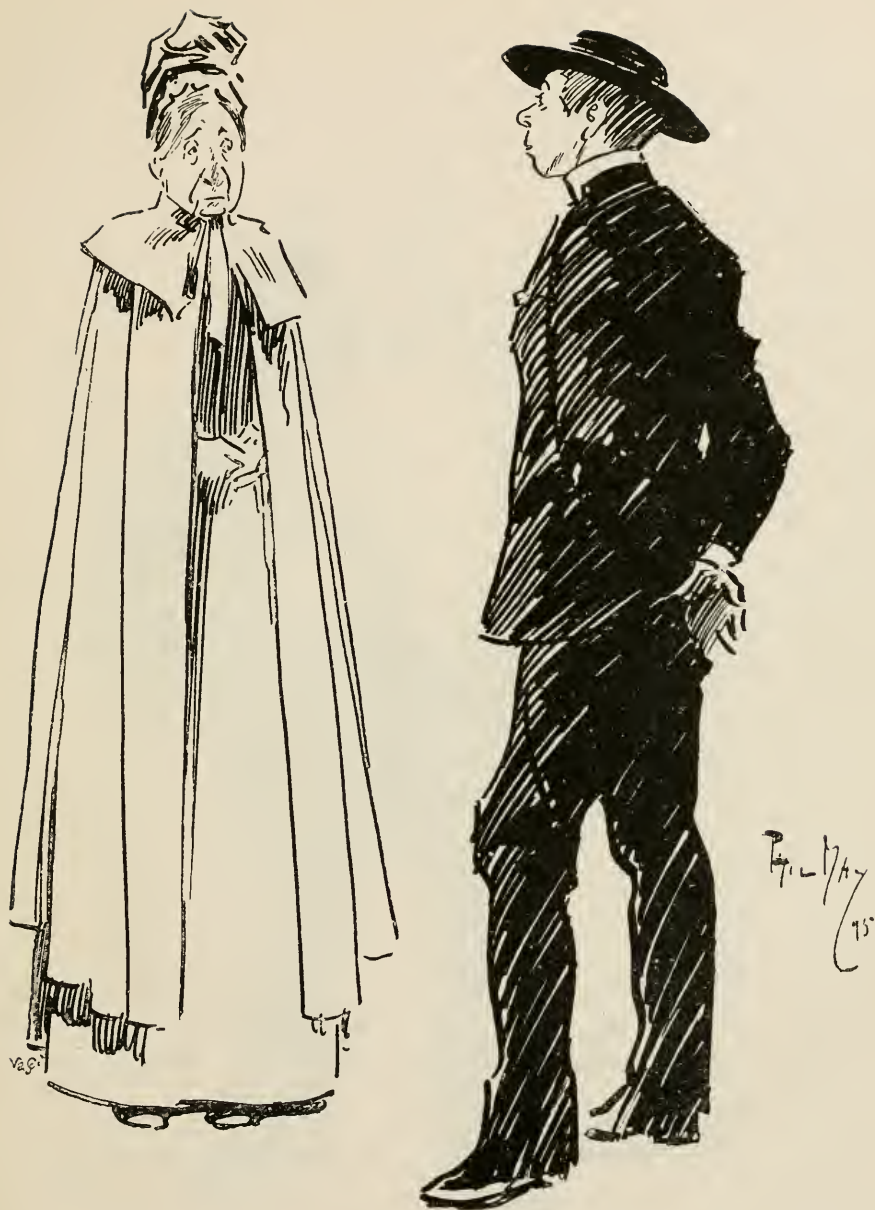
life ; their first appearance in an artistic form has been in the music-hall. When the drama can do this, when it gives us ideas of its own invention, not second-hand ideas, we may begin to talk of its renascence. But not, I submit, before then.





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YES OR NO?



"WELL, AND HOW'S YOUR HUSBAND, MRS. SNOOKSON?"

"OH, 'E'S VERY BAD, POOR DEAR. 'E'S SUCH A MARTYR TO DELIRIUM TREMENS."



"SURE, OI'M GOING TO BE CREMATED WHEN I DIE, SO AS OI WON'T BE BURIED ALOIVI.."



A MILLIONAIRE.



"WHAT'S BECOME OF BROWN? IS HE STILL LIVING?"

"OH, YES."

"POOR DEVIL!"



W. B. B. B. B.

A STUDY.

IF ONLY — !

BY ELFRIDA IONIDES.

JOHN FORRESTER sat by the bedside of Ella Johnston, the girl he loved, and who would have been his wife now had she not been stricken down by the mortal illness which was slowly killing her.

His fingers were upon her pulse and grief in his eyes as he saw her lying there in the characteristic attitude of her illness, an attitude unconsciously assumed to ease her pain in some measure; and he felt his heart gripped by helpless sorrow as he realized how powerless his science was to heal the one being he loved best in the world.

John Forrester was waiting for his colleague and friend, Dr. Bradby, from whose skill and insight he still hoped for some helpful advice; but as he looked at Ella he knew in his heart of hearts that, as medical science then stood, there was no remedy for the disease which had held the beautiful girl in its grasp for months, and was gradually invading the strongholds of life itself.

Presently he heard wheels drive up swiftly and stop. The quick-following click of the closing carriage door told him of his friend's arrival, and he went out to meet him. A close hand-clasp, and then together the two men examined the chart of the patient's breathing, pulse and temperature. Drawing the nurse aside, Dr. Bradby asked what was her report for the morning.

"She has had two attacks since you saw her, sir, but the last was the worst of all, and I am sure, too, that the morphia is losing its power.

Can't you give her something else to deaden the pain?"

"We'll see what we can do—we'll see what we can do," answered Bradby gravely.

"It breaks my heart to see her suffer so," continued the woman. "You see, sir, until yesterday and to-day she has always talked a little, mostly of Dr. Forrester, and been so pleased and thankful about anything that was done for her, and always smiling back at me when I gave her anything. But now there seems no room to think of anything but the pain —" Here the woman broke off, almost weeping.

The doctors turned to the sick-room to see Ella, who moaned in agony as some movement accentuated the pain, and her consciousness escaped the influence of the drug and swam to the surface.

Downstairs the two men looked at each other silently for some seconds, despairing appeal in one face, despairing helplessness in the other. Then Forrester cried,—

"Well? Well?"

And in answer came the awful words:—

"I can do nothing for her—suggest nothing. We must try to keep her well under the influence of drugs to ease her pain. My dear, dear fellow, if I could only help you! . . . She cannot last many weeks, even with her strong vitality. There is nothing to do but to give her what ease we can, and to *hope* for the end."

Forrester had given up all other work for the time, and was living in the house of the dear friend who, but for the dread invader of that happy household, would now have been his second mother. An invalid herself, Mrs. Johnston needed John Forrester to take her place by her daughter's side, and relied on his judgment in all the arrangements of the sick-room.

When Dr. Bradby was gone, Forrester went into the room given him for his study, and read and re-read passages in a recent work, which gave the last words of science upon the malady which was killing Ella. And again he had to face the awful words which seemed beaten into his brain, telling him how the sweet body and sweeter soul he so loved must suffer ever-recurrent fits of agony, crowding on more and more frequently, until presently her remaining days would be one long suffering, till kindly death released her.

Again he saw that dear brow, upon which had always shone love and cheerfulness and sweet contentment, drawn and bedewed with drops of pain; he remembered her last coherent words to him, whispered as he leant over her bed only yesterday.

"Don't be so troubled, dear love. I know you do for me all that can be done—but I have had so little pain to bear in my life, and I'm not used to it. I shall bear it better by-and-by, and not heed it so much."

Brave, patient soul! Had she any foreknowledge of what was to come? Her first thought was always to spare him and her mother; and John groaned as he realized what suffering was needed to break down her fortitude, and force from her the piteous cries for help which had wrung his heart to-day.

Already the opiates were losing their power, and he faced the fact—faced it as only a physician could—that soon he could do *nothing*;

that she must bear everything unhelped; and perhaps even uncomforted by the knowledge of his loving ministrations.

He loved her with his whole soul; to give his life for her would be nothing, and he could not help her! He could only look on, impotent to cure, powerless to save her one pang of her martyrdom, which presently, when no anæsthetic could prevail, would be too awful for human endurance. He must watch the horrible disease march ruthless and relentless upon its ordered way.

His agony perhaps was worse than hers, and his racked brain, still instinctively groping, though hopeless, for some alleviation of the horrors before them both, was suddenly filled with an illuminating thought, as some half-forgotten passages from Munk's "Euthanasia" flashed upon his mind. The subject had interested and occupied him a few years before, and he now murmured the words:—

"A 'beautiful death'; a 'painless death';" adding still lower,—"*A painless putting to death.*"

He shuddered, and thrust the thought from him; fought it through the night, and kept it at bay; but for the next few days it stayed with him day and night, and gradually changed from an awful to a comforting thought.

Ella's condition grew worse, until at last a day came when nothing could be done to help her.

Forrester shut himself up, and questioned himself. "Dare he, a member of a profession in which research was ever finding new healing agencies, new methods of cure—*dare* he decide that nothing could be done for his dear love—save in one way?"

Again he summed up the whole case.

"No one can help her. Bradby, like all the rest, says I can do nothing more. Surely,

surely I, who love her so, must give her ease and rest. . . . It is murder in the eyes of man, but what has that to do with it? God will hold me guiltless. More, He who knows all, who knows what lies before her, must hold me *right*. And she, if her spirit were clear enough to choose, she would choose to die now; unless, in her dear unselfishness, she feared to lay the burden of decision and action upon me."

* * * *

"She shall pass away painlessly," he said to himself, and then was summoned upstairs by an urgent and frightened call from the nurse,—

"Come, sir, come! She is worse, and calls for you."

When this last and worst crisis was past, Ella lay almost senseless, and as Forrester looked upon her, with her passionate, piteous cries of "Help me, help me, John," re-echoing in his ears, he said to himself,—

"Never again shall she call upon me in vain—and only one response is possible."

Turning to the nurse he said,—

"Go into the next room, nurse, and get what sleep you can. I will watch to-night, and call you if I want you."

Left alone with Ella, he looked at her white face for some time with wistful tenderness, and then he fetched the draught of the beneficent drug which was to give her release and peace.

"My dear one, drink; this is the truest gage of love I ever gave you. Drink, my sweet."

A strange peace came upon him too, and the holy calm which was on the dead girl's face was reflected upon his. The fight was over, and surely she and he were victors!

* * * *

The next evening, whilst Forrester was resting after the heavy business of the day, and still was in the state of abnormal calm after recent loss, he received and read a letter written by a

fellow-student, who had been a good friend always both to him and to Ella. It ran:—

"VIENNA, 5th August, 189—

"DEAR JOHN,—

"I have the best news for you. Your sad face, and the thought of Ella's suffering, pursued me so that when I came here I sought out Frobisher. You remember him? He was laughed at in London for his mad theories, but I always thought there might be something in them. He has got countenance here, and he is working hard at one of the largest hospitals, and—can you bear it, my friend?—he has made two wonderful cures in cases like Ella's. I tell you, as a careful, cautious man, that I believe his treatment to be one of the greatest discoveries of the age, *and I believe he can cure Ella*.

"I enclose full extracts from Frobisher's case-book. Begin the treatment *at once*, but go carefully, and see that you put no strain upon the already over-worked heart. But do not delay; *try it, try it*, for I know there is in it salvation for Ella. I follow this letter in twenty-four hours, that I may give you the benefit of my clinical experience under Frobisher, but you must not wait for me, as ease from pain follows astonishingly quickly upon the beginning of treatment. . . ."

Forrester read through the case-book carefully, and as he sat all night with it open before him, he knew that if he had but waited she might have been with him now.

Grey, and careworn, and changed, he took up his burden next morning. The man was dead, and buried in Ella's narrow grave, but the physician in him lives on, and his life is given to the service of his suffering brethren. But as he goes amongst them, the utterance of his whole soul is one "If only ———!"



A STUDY.



ARRIVAL OF TRIPPERS AT SCARBORO'.



Tragedian (disappointed): "YOU SHOULD SEE ME PLAY 'AMLET. IRVING? WHY, I COULD ACT 'IS BLOOMIN' 'EAD OFF."



T. G. M.
95

Theatrical Lodging-house Keeper : "WHAT NAME DID YOU SAY, SIR? HARLTON?"

Actor (about to take apartments) : "NO, NOT HARLTON—ARLTON."

Theatrical Lodging-house Keeper : "OH, THANK GOODNESS, I'M SPARED ONE HAITCH FOR A WEEK."

THE MISLAID CHILD : AN EXTRAVAGANCE.

BY GRANT RICHARDS.

THE train was already three minutes late in leaving Cannon Street, and the guard had whistled and waved his flag, and done all the other conventional things that sometimes betoken a speedy departure, when the door was flung open and, just as we began to move, a lady was pushed into our carriage. It was a "smoker"; and, after recovering her breath, she apologised for her intrusion. We were alone in the carriage, my friend and I—I did not know him then; this day marked the beginning of our acquaintance—and he immediately won my respect by throwing his cigar out of the window. The lady protested, but not soon enough to avert the sacrifice. Myself, I was not smoking.

The train was an express, and would not stop till Redhill was reached, and after this brief disturbance, we settled down to our evening papers. Suddenly I was startled by a sob. Looking up I saw that the lady was not only crying, but was evidently labouring under some sudden and strange excitement. I was just going to speak when my friend addressed her. "Madam," he began, "pray excuse the interference of a stranger, but is there anything —?"

"I have forgotten my baby!" she gasped.

"Where?—when?" he asked.

"Just now in Cannon Street. I was in the waiting-room waiting for the train. Baby was on the seat beside me. I looked up suddenly, saw the train was at that moment due to start,

jumped up . . . and here I am. I ran all the way up the platform in my anxiety, just caught the train, as you saw, and now what shall I do? I must stop the train; I must go back. Oh! what shall I do?" She gasped rather than spoke the sentences, punctuating them with sobs.

The situation was a strange one: she had already begun to look round for the communicator. I wondered what her hearer would say and do.

"It's no use stopping the train, madam," he broke in. "We're not within a mile of a station here. In half an hour"—looking at his watch—"we shall be at Redhill, and then you must telegraph. It will be quickest and best."

There was further conversation. The woman protested at the delay. He spoke with assurance, and she subsided; and the silence was untroubled save by her sobs. The train arrived at Redhill; my friend took the lady to the station-master, briefly explained the circumstances (for the poor soul was too excited to be coherent), and then rejoined me. The carriage had received no further occupant, and naturally we fell to talking of the woman and her adventure. We took to each other at once, and in a few minutes he was telling me of his position, where he was going, and, as some people otherwise reserved will do with a stranger who takes their fancy, was explaining his most private affairs. "Oddly enough," he said, "I was once mixed up in just such an accident as that

myself, only I was the father of the child who was lost, and I wasn't there at the time. But I'll tell you about it.

"I'm fifty now, as I said, and a widower with grown-up children. Five years ago I was living in the States, where I had an engineer's appointment. But I'd made my pile, and was thinking of coming home; so it was arranged that my wife—who was living then—should come over to England first with the children—there were three of them, all girls, the eldest being seventeen, the next ten, the youngest six—and look out for a house to suit us. I wasn't sorry to have her go. To tell the truth, I wanted a rest. She used to nag me—you know what I mean; and the two eldest girls took the cue from her behaviour. I didn't get much pleasure out of my family except from Ethel, the little one, whom perhaps I spoiled, but whom certainly the others ill-treated and were jealous of. My wife ignored her, and never took her into her calculations. I wanted to keep Ethel behind with me, but my wife wouldn't hear of it, and they all went off together. They didn't write much. I didn't expect it, and certainly they wouldn't mention Ethel if they could help it. And as they never said anything about her, I took it for granted she was all right.

"After they'd been gone about nine months, I followed them. They'd taken a house at Wimbledon, and seemed satisfied. My wife, if I could judge from her letters, was less inclined to worry me now she was back in England—she had never liked America. I arrived late one night in January, thoroughly done up with travelling right through. My wife and the two eldest children came into the hall to welcome me, and I had every reason to be pleased with my reception. Ethel no doubt, I thought, had gone to bed, and I should go up to see her

directly. We sat down to supper. 'How is Ethel, dear?' I asked my wife, and I hope as long as I live I may never see a question have such an effect again. For a moment she seemed to be collecting her thoughts, and then suddenly she turned livid before my eyes. 'Ethel . . . Ethel!' she gasped. 'Ethel is . . . Ethel is . . .'

"'God, woman,' I shouted, starting to my feet (I was alarmed and lost my head), 'speak out! Where is she? What has happened? Why didn't you write? She's well, isn't she? Well, why don't you speak?' But it was useless; she had fainted, and was hanging on the side of the chair, a ghastly sight. Leaving the children to look after her—in my excitement I had almost forgotten they were in the room, quite forgotten that they could perhaps tell me where and how my darling was—I rushed to the head of the kitchen stairs. I met the servant coming up. 'Where is Miss Ethel?' I cried. The maid had hardly seen me before, and looked at me as if I were mad. 'Miss Ethel! who's she, sir? I never heard of her.' Distraught, unable to contain myself, I rushed back to the room. My wife was lying on the floor, still unconscious, breathing horribly. 'Where is your sister?' I asked Kate, the eldest of the children. In the brief moment of waiting for a reply I could see she was as white as paper.

"'I don't know, father. Get mother well, and she'll tell you. . . . We don't know. We haven't seen her since we were in Scotland.'

"To cut matters short, I poured the most of a jug of cold water over my wife's head; I slapped her hands, her feet, and her spine; and I sent for a doctor. It was a regular swoon (her heart was weak), and she took some time to recover. I wasn't allowed to see her again that night. I went to bed, but not to sleep. It was

clear Ethel was not in the house. Her sisters evidently didn't know where she was, and my wife, when interrogated, fainted away. I could only think the worst.

"At noon the following day I was told my wife was better, and wanted to see me. I went to her with rage in my heart, and horrid anxiety. Sitting up in bed, in a yellow dressing-jacket, her pale hair about her face and neck, she looked fearfully ill, but I felt no pity. Where was my darling? What had been done to her? These questions, throbbing through my brain, made the burden of my thought, leaving no room for compassion. 'Archie,' she moaned at once, her voice catching on sobs, 'I had forgotten all about Ethel till last night. I left her at Perthlochrie . . . I don't know where she is now.' And then came the full confession. After landing at Liverpool they had gone near Inverness to visit some of my wife's relations. When they came south again they had had to change at Perthlochrie. Now my wife's memory was a very good one when the subject was recalled to her. She remembered every incident connected with Ethel up till that time. Apparently she had told her to sit down on the seat in the station while she and the two elder girls—they had nearly an hour to wait—went into the town to buy some fruit. From Kate I discovered that she had asked her mother, as they made their way out of the station, where Ethel was, and had had a sharp reply that Ethel was all right. And this reply she asserted—and I had no good ground on which to doubt her—she had, when an hour later the train started with Ethel still absent, taken to imply that some arrangement had been made for her sister to stop behind. She knew, too, from the tone in which the reply had been given that the subject irritated her mother, and so she had not only refrained from reverting

to it herself, but she had also told her younger sister to avoid it. Anyhow, my wife could not deny that from the moment she had gone out of the station, leaving Ethel on the seat, until the day of my return, nearly nine months later, she had entirely forgotten the child's existence. Kate it was who looked after Ethel's clothes and things, and Kate purposely, from motives of policy, and also, it must be confessed, because she didn't like her sister, and was only too glad to dismiss her from her thoughts and conversation, didn't mention her name. It had been an unconscious conspiracy of silence. 'As far as I was concerned, it was as if the child had never been born,' my wife said. 'I never heard her name and never saw anything of hers to remind me of her. When we had finished shopping at Perthlochrie that day, we had only just time to catch the train—we had to run to catch it; it never occurred to me to miss her.' And that was the burden of all I could get her to say. It had been a pretty muddle, but she was suffering for it then. From the shock of my anger and of the discovery of the result of her carelessness she never recovered. It thoroughly unhinged her, and she died within the year.

"Naturally I was half distracted. Still there was nothing to be done but to go to Perthlochrie and make inquiries. Surely the child would be easy enough to trace. She was very young, of course, and she knew of no address to give, but still she could talk, she was obviously of well-to-do parents, and some one would have taken care of her. Anyhow, if the worst came to the worst, she would have found her way to the workhouse.

"I got my wife out of bed, ill though she still was, and made her leave London with me that very night for Perthlochrie. In the train, running through the darkness, I could hardly contain myself. The joy I had in returning to

England was mostly bound up in Ethel, and now, through her own mother's criminal carelessness, she was lost—possibly for ever. In the interval she might have been ill looked after. She might have died of neglect.

"At last, in the grey cold of a winter morning, we ran into the station where my darling had been left. I carried no luggage but a hand-bag, so, although the platform was large and crowded with passengers, it did not take me a minute to find the station-master.

"'One minute, sir, if you please. This train must go before I can attend to you,' and I had to control my impatience. And even when the platform was empty and I could tell him my story, I could get but little satisfaction. He was only a deputy for the real station-master, he said, and could say nothing himself. Certainly he had heard of a little girl being found, but his colleague would come on duty at nine, and if I would return then I could see him and hear the facts. I had two hours to wait! My wife insisted on my taking her into the station hotel to breakfast, and perhaps it was as well—at least it filled up the time.

"There is a sort of restaurant connected with the hotel at Perthochrie, giving onto the station, and we took our places at one of the windows, where I could command the whole platform. 'There, it was under that clock, on that very seat by the book-stall, that I left the child,' my wife explained.

"Waiting for breakfast and eating it—not that we either of us ate much—took up more than an hour. I watched the hands creep slowly round the clock until at last it was after half-past eight. I had turned aside for a moment to pay the bill when I felt my wife's hand grip my arm. I looked round at her and then followed the direction of her gaze. There, under the clock, sat Ethel, almost as I had

seen her last. Leaving my wife, and the waitress with my change in her hand, I rushed on to the platform. Yes, it was Ethel, and she knew me, and as I ran towards her she jumped up, and when I reached her flung herself crying into my arms. 'You have come at last! I knew you would! I knew you would!'

"Well, it's no use my telling you, everything she said, and I said, and my wife said. I tell you I was happy to hold my darling in my arms again, safe and sound, hardly altered from when I had said good-bye to her on the steamer at New York! Of course she was too young to explain all that happened since her mother had left her. I had to wait till the station-master arrived, and then I heard the story. It appeared that she stopped where she had been put for a couple of hours. Then one of the porters, noticing how young she was and that she seemed to have no one looking after her, asked her where she was going. 'I'm waiting for mother,' she answered, 'and then we're going to London.' But as the London train had gone more than an hour, something was evidently wrong. He went and reported the story to his chief, and they questioned the child together. It soon became clear that she had been left behind. But nothing would induce her to leave her seat. She was so sure her mother would come back for her.

"Well, the long and short of it was that she was so pretty and helpless that when the evening came the station-master—who had no children of his own—took her home to his wife, and she slept in his house that night. He had telegraphed to Euston that the child was safe if inquiries were made, and naturally he expected he would have to send her south the next morning. But no inquiries were made, of course. The Euston people had heard nothing about any missing child, and day followed day

and still she remained at Perthlochrie. Her name and that her destination was London seemed the full extent of her knowledge ; nor was any inquiry up the line able to elicit further information. He could only come to the conclusion that she had been left behind on purpose. But as his wife took to her as much as he had done himself, it never occurred to either of them that they should not keep her ; and as the months went by they became so used to her and her ways that they looked upon her as their own child, sent by God to recompense them for their childlessness. But nothing would induce Ethel to stop indoors during the day. Every morning, week-day and Sunday, she would go after breakfast to the station and would take up her place on the seat her mother had taken her to. She hardly seemed conscious of the flight of the weeks, so confident was she that her mother would come. 'But I never expected *you*, father,' she said.

"Every one in the station got to love the little maid. She became quite one of the features of the place, and when we came away

all the porters and people came and gave her three cheers and made all the other passengers wonder what was the matter. And she hung out of the carriage window as we left the platform and kissed her hands, and promised to return, like the little queen she was. The sight was almost worth the shock of losing her : you could see how sorry they all were at her going. But the worst of it was—and is—that she got up quite a love affair with a news-stall boy—a pretty little Scotch chap of twelve years old, who used to take her all the picture-papers and tell her stories. She'd promised to marry him, she said, when she grew up, and when we came away it was at him she looked most, and I could see how hard put to it he was to keep the tears from his cheeks. Poor little fellow ! But she hasn't forgotten him. She's eleven now, but she still means to marry him. He's seventeen, and has managed to go to one of the Scotch Universities—Edinburgh, I believe—and they write each other letters. I don't know how I shall get her to give him up."

"Though her parents have mislaid her."

"You see I was forgotten."

The Shop Girl.

"I was not surprised that he, believing me to be dead, did not recognise me. 'Captain,' said I, 'was the merchant's name, to whom these bales belonged, Sinbad ?' 'Yes,' replied he, 'that was his name; he came from Bagdad, and embarked on board my ship at Bussorah. One day when we landed at an island to take in water and other refreshments, I know not by what mistake, I sailed without observing that he did not re-embark with us ; neither I nor the merchants perceived it till four hours after.'"

Second Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor.



P/H 16 P/A-
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